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To the Editor of the Athenæum.

SIR,—I should feel obliged by your inserting the following truly lamentable case in your valuable Paper, in hopes it may meet the eye of the Charitable and Humane.—The Lady, in whose behalf this appeal is made to the benevolent public, is a Widow, left almost without provision, with six young Children, two of whom are ill; one of them dangerously so, from a concussion of the brain, from which he has already been suffering eight weeks. The Widow's late Husband was a gentleman of independent property, but from unforeseen misfortunes was reduced to poverty. He died last year in a deep decline, aged thirty-seven, his death being accelerated by his sad reverse of fortune. His Widow, at the present moment, is in the greatest distress, without money, or the means of obtaining any, to pay her rent, or to purchase the common necessities of life, besides fatigue and anxiety, not being able to keep a servant, or have a nurse to wait upon her sick children. The Widow is the eldest daughter of a late Beneficed Clergyman of the Established Church. Her case is truly pitiable, and has been strictly investigated by persons of the highest respectability. Messrs. Hammeny & Co. have been recommended to the benevolent public, and any further information can be obtained through them. I am, Sir, your obedient servant.

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(By order of the Executors.)

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D. Perri J. de Maubeuge V. der Meulen

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Of Lieut.-Gen. SIR HERBERT TAYLOR, G.C.B., Deceased, Removed from St. Catherine's Lodge.

May be viewed three days preceding.

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James Madden & Co., successors to Parbury & Co., 3, Leadenhall-street.

LONDON, SATURDAY, MARCH 14, 1846.

REVIEWS

The Lyceums; a Word for the Operatives of Manchester. Manchester, Banks & Co.

Report of the Manchester Lyceum, Great Ancoats-street.

Report of the Salford Lyceum.

Catalogue of the Exhibition of Works of Art, Curiosities, Antiquities, &c., in Aid of the Funds of the Salford Mechanics' Institution. Salford, Jackson.

"The poor," says the Scripture, "shall never cease from the land." Inequality of conditions has ever been, since human society was formed, and seems to be an essential condition of its existence. But though the division of mankind into classes is strongly marked, the ranks are not so separated as to prevent the interchange of sympathy; the poor are necessary to the rich, and the rich are necessary to the poor; labour is required to render capital productive, capital is wanting to maintain a steady demand for labour. Each class is therefore interested in the prosperity of the other, and experience has especially shown that, whatever tends to elevate the physical and moral condition of the poor, tends in a still greater degree to render the enjoyments of wealth more extensive and more secure. In no place has this truth been felt and acted on more extensively than in Manchester, the seat of immense capital and of an immense population. It is stated on good authority that the number of inhabitants in Manchester and the adjoining townships has increased sevenfold in little more than half a century. The social condition of so dense a population could not be neglected with impunity; were benevolence extinct, enlightened self-interest must have compelled the capitalists to watch over the moral habits of their operatives, and to take care that they should not only be good workmen but good citizens. It has appeared to many an easy task to legislate for the morals of the poor; they had one invariable remedy—restriction; but the application of this imperial remedy has led to many unexpected consequences, without at all alleviating the disease. Those who have investigated the matter more closely have discovered that the evils of poverty are numerous and varied, and that permanent good cannot be effected, unless a diversity of remedies be applied.

The most prominent evil among the lower classes is improvidence, taking no thought for the morrow; the results of a week's toil spent in one night's debauch, the opportunity of obtaining employment neglected, work laid aside to indulge some frolic, a strike from mere caprice, and a thousand similar manifestations of this evil must have met the observation of those acquainted with the working population. But this improvidence is itself the result of ignorance, ignorance which cannot register the past, comprehend the present, or speculate on the future. But this ignorance was not merely injurious to the men, it was perilous to the masters, as those who remember the reign of King Lud can amply testify. The diffusion of knowledge and the general spread of education became therefore objects of primary importance, and Mechanics' Institutes were established. The first in England was founded in Manchester, by Mr. Rowland Tetrosier, in 1819. There have been several strikes and turn-outs since that period, but they have for the most part been exhibitions of moral strength, which could not be witnessed without admiration; the men bore the pinching pressure of want with firmness, abstaining to the very last from crime; so that it is quite proverbial

there, that when any single act of violence is committed during a turn-out, the whole matter may be considered at an end.

But the benefits of the Mechanics' Institutes have latterly been extended beyond simple instruction. In the year 1837, rational amusements were added, tea and coffee parties were formed, enlivened by vocal and instrumental music, and by exhibitions of the phantasmagoria and the oxy-hydrogen microscope. These exhibitions were also displayed in the Whitsun-week of that year, to assist various Sunday-school visitors and teachers in their laudable endeavours to amuse their scholars and draw them from the scenes of immorality and vice incident to the race-course. Upwards of four thousand children were on this occasion admitted to the lecture-room. Three excellent concerts were also given, at which the directors engaged the services of several eminent vocalists, and, though the price of admission was only sixpence, there was a small balance in favour of the Institution. These successful experiments have since been repeated, and we see by the last Report that Colonel Chatterton allowed the band of the Fourth Dragoon Guards to become a powerful auxiliary to the evening amusements. We may add that he evinced similar liberality to the Exhibition at the Mechanics' Institute in Birmingham.

At the end of the year 1838 the Directors, acting on the suggestion of Sir Benjamin Heywood, tried the experiment of opening an exhibition of models, natural history, and works of art. Its success was triumphant. In thirty-five days, more than 50,000 persons passed through the rooms, and no instance occurred of wilful injury to any of the articles exhibited.

The Salford exhibition, which is now open, affords peculiar facilities for estimating the moral influence of these institutions. A mechanical system of delivering and registering checks enables the directors to keep an exact statistical account of their visitors. From the hourly returns of the number of visitors, kept by the registrar, it is at once evident that the great majority of these belong to the operative class, for the numbers are far the greatest after the hour when the mills cease from work. The amount of visitors up to the beginning of this month exceeded 75,000. Similar exhibitions, with the like success, are open at Birmingham, Wigan, and Huddersfield, and have been at Newcastle and Derby. As an additional proof that a love of mischief has been unfairly attributed to the working classes, we may mention that all the exhibitions and institutions of Manchester were gratuitously open to the public on the day of the Queen's marriage, and that the only damage done anywhere was the accidental breaking of a pane of glass in the museum of Natural History.

The result of these exhibitions was to give the higher classes confidence in the lower classes. Hitherto, society had frowned upon all the amusements of the poor man: in the words of the Rev. Orville Dewey, "the importunate spirit in business, and the sanctimonious spirit in religion, and the supercilious spirit in fashion, united to discountenance popular sports and spectacles." Restraint was deemed the great want of mankind in everything. But when the directors of these exhibitions saw the eager attention paid by crowds to the wonders of nature and art, heard their intelligent observations, and found, by experience, that there was no necessity for the jealous watchfulness of superintendence, they could not avoid asking themselves—Why do these persons go to the gin-shop and ale-house? How does it happen that they are duped by the nonsense of Chartists and Socialists? The answer to these questions, like many other

important truths, lay upon the surface: it had escaped notice simply because it was too obvious.

The first great want of a poor man is a place where he can sit down in quiet: whole families often occupy only a single room, for eating, drinking, and sleeping; under such circumstances, when his day's work is done, the labourer can only find rest and quiet in the tavern or the Social hall. In both places he obtains these and recreation,—a little conversation, and a glance at the newspaper. It appeared to many intelligent persons, that, by combination, such advantages could be obtained for a very trifling expense, without the attendant evils, and hence arose the institution of Lyceums.

The Mechanics' Institutes had, in fact, taken too high a ground; they had benefited the middle rather than the lower classes, and hence a cheaper system became necessary. It was resolved, in the first place, that the subscription to the Lyceums should not exceed twopence per week, and for this sum the managers engaged to supply instruction by lectures, classes, and mutual discussion, together with the means of rational and innocent amusement. At the outset, the question of establishing a "Temperance News Room," as part of the plan, seemed beset with difficulties; countless objections were made to the diffusion of political information, which it required more than ordinary firmness to overcome. This question is well argued in the report of the Salford Lyceum:—

"The Committee cannot sufficiently express their sense of the great importance of newspaper reading to the working classes. To what a disadvantage does a striving mechanic appear on the stage of life, even though his mind be ever so well stored with literature, if he does not possess that intimate knowledge of men and things—that close acquaintance with the stern realities of life, for want of which many an unfortunate artisan has fallen a prey to those designing men, with whom all large towns abound: and where can he expect to find human nature more faithfully exhibited, or human villainy more frequently detected and exposed than in the public press of the empire?"

In the report of the Manchester Lyceum we find that—

"The News Room is supplied with thirty-five newspapers per week; comprising London daily papers—London weekly papers—all the Manchester papers—and the local papers of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dublin, and the principal towns in the kingdom. The room is warm and comfortable—the walls are covered with maps.—It is open from eight in the morning until ten in the evening. The advantages of this department are highly esteemed by the adult members; many call in during the day, as they have opportunity; and in the evening the room is always filled."

In fact, we believe, that to the introduction of newspapers the great and early success of the Lyceums must mainly be attributed. The working classes will not do without them; the operative must have his paper as regularly as the merchant; if he cannot have it in the "Temperance News Room," he will seek it in the ale-house. A less difficulty, but still one which gave rise to some discussion, was the selection of papers: it was wisely decided that the choice should be left to the operatives themselves, and they have made a very fair division of parties. The libraries attached to the Lyceums are circulating; they consist chiefly of donations, and are consequently very miscellaneous. It appears that voyages and travels are preferred to every other species of literature, and that no critics are more difficult to be pleased with novels than the operatives.

The News Room and Library are open on Sundays, an arrangement in which all parties have acquiesced on a full view of the requisites of the case. While the obligation of attending divine service was universally recognized, it was obvious that on Sunday the poor man would feel

the want of a place in which he could sit with comfort, more sensibly than on any other day of the week. If the Lyceum should be closed, it was certain that he would go to the alehouse. Though the exertions of the "Manchester Society for the Protection of Foot-paths" have kept open a greater number of rural walks about the town than are to be found in any other place with which we are acquainted, yet in wet weather—that is to say, two out of every three days in the year—this resource is unavailing. It is the general opinion of the Directors of the three Lyceums, that those who most frequently come to the News Room on Sunday, are also the most regular attendants at their respective places of worship.

The Lyceums have classes both for males and females, which is a decided improvement on the system of Mechanics' Institutes. The system of instruction includes Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Grammar, Elementary Mathematics, and Music. The females are taught Knitting and plain Needle-work.

Music, vocal and instrumental, may be called the universal passion in Manchester. Small and great, rich and poor, high and low, obtain the best musical instruction they can afford to purchase: there are glee-clubs, and catch-clubs, and concert clubs in every rank of society, and in every corner of the town. The Directors of the Lyceums have made musical instruction a prominent part of their system: the reasons they have assigned for cultivating music, in the Salford Report, deserve the attention of all who are interested in promoting the welfare of the working classes:—

"The Committee having had their attention called to the allurements held out to the working classes by many of the beer houses, by means of organs and other musical instruments, thereby indicating the taste of the people, felt it incumbent upon them to establish rival attraction in the formation of classes for the cultivation of vocal and instrumental music. They are happy to say, that their expectations have been fully realized in the numbers who have attended, particularly in the vocal class. In connexion with this class, a monthly assembly is held at the Carpenters' Hall, joined by the vocal classes of the other Lyceums, and is called the Popular Choral Society, where sacred and other music is sung by upwards of one hundred voices. The Committee feel satisfied, that, in refining the taste, and laying music of a high character before the pupils, they are doing much to wean them from the coarse and immoral exhibitions which are to be witnessed too frequently in almost every street of the borough."

The concerts at the Lyceums are already very attractive, and afford rational amusement at the slightest possible cost. There is generally an amateur performance at the tea and coffee parties, after which the younger members sometimes get up a dance. The order and propriety observed would bear comparison with the most fashionable ball and concert in the higher circles.

We have dwelt chiefly on the amusements provided in the Lyceums, because we regard them not only as their most novel, but as their most important features. There can be little doubt that the intemperance of the lower ranks must mainly be attributed to the want of simple, innocent, and authorized recreations. Men cannot labour incessantly; they must have intervals of relaxation. What is to be done in these intervals? This is a question which it would be well if legislators and philanthropists would examine with the sobriety of reason, instead of the nervousness of distrust. There are moralists and preachers who rail at music and dancing, and inveigh against the popular shows, spectacles, and amusements of the continent: we do not agree with them—we prefer the theatre and the concert to the gin palace; and public assemblies, public gardens and public exhibitions to private debauchery.

Let all who are still possessed with the old jealousy and suspicion of the working-classes—who still think that there is danger in opening valuable collections, whether of pictures, or statuary, or natural history, to public inspection—visit, as we have, the exhibitions of the Mechanics' Institutes; see them thronged by working mechanics and their families; observe the interest they take in the delicate machinery of models, the costly works of art, the specimens of natural history, and the rich manufactures collected there, and their pleased and grateful attention and scrutiny, and then say whether they had not done injustice to their intelligence, their manners, and their conduct. There is just as little ground for the suspicion with which the pleasures of the poor have been viewed, and the sour pharisaic spirit in which they have been curtailed. It is not very long since there was a kind of crusade against music licences, and a pretty general belief that every assembly of the lower orders, for singing and dancing, must, of necessity, be a scene of vice. To a certain extent they were so: when innocent pleasures are forbidden by public morality, and repressed by the strong hand of power, these very pleasures become poisoned fountains; it is the prohibition, not the indulgence, which creates the vice.

Many worthy people are just now alarmed at the progress, of what has been facetiously termed, Socialism; and many wise persons have been surprised at the success of a system so palpably absurd. If the Socialists confined themselves to lectures, assuredly their system would make but little progress, but they provide amusement for their converts: the pleasures of music, dancing, and conversation, may be enjoyed in the hall of the Socialists; and by many who frequent the place, the lectures are regarded as a tax on admission. People would not crowd to the Socialists if they could obtain the same pleasures anywhere else. Dissent owes its great strength, in manufacturing towns, to the vocal music, the holding of meetings at the hour when the mechanic has finished the toils of the day, and to the share which the congregations take in public worship. Socialism has taken the hint and carried the system further: common sense might beneficially follow the example.

There remains one peculiarity of the Manchester Lyceums to be noticed, and it is one of great value and importance. Those who have founded them, and who continue to take an active interest in their prosperity, have, from the very outset, refrained from everything like patronage or superiority. They say, and they say truly, it is our interest that our workmen should be sober, intelligent, and happy; every exertion for their moral improvement is directed, not only to their advantage, but to our continued prosperity and security. We are, therefore, joint-labourers with them for the benefit of a community in which our stake is much larger than theirs. This is the right spirit; and to the absence of such a spirit the failure of many benevolent plans for the moral improvement of the poor must mainly be attributed. Sympathy is the great bond which links together the various classes of society; if you expect gratitude from the poor man, you must show that you not only feel for him, but with him. So far as the experiment of Lyceums has been tried, it has succeeded beyond all expectation: to the poor, they have afforded innocent, healthy and moral recreations; to the rich, they have yielded the greatest pleasure which in this world we can hope to possess, the consciousness of creating and diffusing happiness. What spectacle can luxury itself offer that can compare with the sight of a multitude, cheerful without rudeness, and joyous without riotous excess? We trust that these institutions will spread over the country, and that those who

have the power will feel it to be their duty to multiply the number of light hearts and happy faces.

Thomas à Becket; a Dramatic Chronicle, in Five Acts. By George Darley, Author of 'Sylvia, or the May-Queen.' Moxon.

Nina Sforza; a Tragedy, in Five Acts. By Richard Zouch S. Troughton. Saunders & Otley.

The link which ties these works together, is their unsuitability to the stage, and their merit as dramatic poems. So far, however, as 'Thomas à Becket' is concerned, this unsuitability was premeditated. "Being impressed," says the writer in his preface, "with an idea that the age of legitimate acting drama has long gone by, that means to reproduce such a species of literature do not exist in our present cast of mind, manners and language,—I have, under this persuasion, spent no vain time upon attempts to fit 'Thomas à Becket' for the public scene. Yet a subject more nobly suited thereto, could scarcely be chosen, if dramatic faculties to grapple with its colossal nature were forthcoming." But in spite of Mr. Darley's formal disclaimer of all purpose to

— "cram
Within the wooden O"—

"the grandeur of Becket's character, his indomitable resolution, his sublime arrogance itself—his triumphs, his failures, and the terrific pathos of his fate," our chronicler has shown such glimpses, not only of perception but of power, that we are half-inclined to regret the form which, in subservience to his own distinctly enunciated theory, his work has taken. For, wherever "the swelling scene" rises before the eye of the reader, in fancy made spectator, Mr. Darley is most successful,—the least successful portions of his chronicle being those episodes where the poet's fancy, rioting and expanding itself, creates beings so eccentric in their uncouthness as to weary the sympathy of those most willing to be led out of the paths of common life and nature. It was the constantly obtruding presence of a like quaint and salvage rudeness—it was this Satyr's hairy face (so to speak) peering in discordantly, amidst the revel of the court of Faëry—which kept the poet's former work, 'Sylvia,' from finding that acceptance with the public which its melody, delicate fancy, and poetical imagery so well deserved. Wherever he has to do with the magnificent churchman or the overweening monarch, or John of Salisbury, the profound scholar and author of 'Nugæ Curialium,'—or Cœur de Lion exhibited as a lion's cub—Mr. Darley carries us along with him;—not so, when he dwells upon the outrageous and distorted villany of Dwergra, Queen Eleanor's dwarf and familiar—a monstrous shape, staring far too prominently forward from his canvas.

The name of Queen Eleanor will at once suggest to the reader that Mr. Darley has woven into his chronicle of the strife betwixt the Crown and the Church, the gentler sorrows of the Rose of Woodstock. With these, however, our record cannot concern itself; and having indicated the nature of the love-story, we are free to make such extracts as seem best to us:—the first displaying the Primate in all his sumptuous hospitality—the scene, "Apartments in Becket's palace, gorgeously set out and illuminated."

Drink gentlemen!

Ye trifle with me only!—Fill me there
A horn of hippocras, so amber-pure
The yellow lights shall flame more lustrous through it!
Brim it up, boy! till the fresh dazling foam
Swell o'er its burnish'd lip, like these fair bosoms
Above their bordering gold!—Health, beauteous Dames!
Sweet Demoiselles! health, noble Chevaliers!
Pledge me, I pray you, all!—my wishes are
So personal for the health of each, they ask
Unanimous return!

[To a Page.]

Guests. Be happy, sir,
As you deserve; we need not wish you more!
Becket. Thanks! thanks!—Now let the flood of joy roll on
And bear us with it,—so we keep our feet!
Now let the perfume of air with pleasure glow
Till even the heart melt, the iciest burn!
Now, gallants, lead your mistresses a measure
Where they can prove the Graces are not fled
With classic times!—Come, ladies!—Sooth I'll swear
You've not fine ankles if you fear to show 'em!—
Minstrels, strike up! Let the gay mandolin
Mock the grave-voiced theorbo; whilst the harp,
With intricacy sweet of various changes,
Bewilders its own strain; and life and shalm,
Piercing the tabret's solid booming hum,
Give a clear edge to music!—*Trompeurs! Conteurs!*
Spread, spread about your free wits and yourselves!
Hie to the bow'd chamber and alcove
Whither Love's chief luxuriants retire,
And in the ear of bending beauty pour
Your amorous songs, and tell soul-moving tales,
Or mirthful, to such triumph of your skill,
That these vast domes re-murmur with sweet sighs
Or throb with echoing laughter. Make all pleased
To be here, as I am to see them!

In the next passage, the temporal and spiritual
royalties are exhibited in collision:—
*Enter Becket, arrayed in purple and pall, with his Crozier
elevated, and a proud retinue.*

Henry. Heyday! the Pope of Canterbury!
Or Babylonian Lady all a-flare
For hot contest!—What think ye, cousins, are we
To have our heads broke with the pastoral Cross?
Becket. I bear it for my sole protection!
Henry. Ay!
What dread'st thou? else than paying thy just debts
To me and to the state? Dost need protection
Against thy creditors, like a prodigal?—
Glanville, that scro!—

Item: three hundred pounds,—
Which thou didst levy upon Eye and Berkham,
Late thy honours; *Item:* five hundred marks,
I lent thee at Toulouse; *Item:* five hundred,—
For which I stood thy surety to a Jew,
Whom thou deal'st much with, till thy credit broke,
What time thou wallowed in the wanton streams
Of luxury most dissolute; Besides
An *item*, which to such rogues we set down
Plain theft, but to thy Grace embezzlement,—
Forty-four thousand marks, the balance due
From rents, proceeds, and profits of all prelates,
Abbeys, and baronies, by thee administer'd
When Chancellor. *Item*—

Becket. My liege! my liege! my liege!
Henry. Oh! I am then thy sovereign yet, it seems!
Most affable subject, still to call me liege!
(*To himself.*) Yea, snapt that nerve which keeps up most
men's pride,

The purse-string!—
Becket. I did never lack allegiance.—
But for my lavishness as Chancellor,
Call it more loose than his who lets the wealth
Of Tagus' bed roll down by golden shoals
Into the wasteful ocean,—'twas a thing
Praised, as magnificent in the minister
Which made for the more glory of the master,
Whose humour now condemns it!—Was he, sire,
Who had been found a fraudulent Chancellor
Deem'd fit to be a Primate?

Henry. 'Tis not what
He had been deem'd, but what we've proved him since.
Becket. Crying injustice! able to bring down
Those spheres in molten fragments on mankind,
But that 'twould crush the guiltless with the guilty!

Henry. Thank heaven we have one milk-white soul among
Thou scarlet sinner!—Why—My gorge is swollen
With names, not huge enough for thy vast insolence!—
Tell me this—thou—who claim'st the Sainthood next
Vacant i' the Calendar,—this, Immaculate!—
Thou didst subscribe in these law-guarded terms,
'Legally, with good faith, and without fraud,
Without reserve,—to certain Constitutions,
Which thou abjur'st now: does such perjury
Merit no lapidation from the spheres?
If they did hurl their hissing firestones at us?

Becket. There was no perjury!
Henry. Hear this! hear this!—
Sun-dwelling Truth, hast thou not one bright dart
To strike him through the brain with?—Ye, grave Suf-
fragans! (*To the Bishops.*)
Did your supreme here (give me your corporate voice)
Swear to our Constitutions, yea or no?

Bishops. Yea.
Becket. Foolish children that would judge their father!—
I kept to what I swore, those Constitutions,
While they were such: but when a power beyond
Thine to enact, annulled them, how could I
Observe non-entites?

Henry. Fraud within fraud!
In this same way you may play fast and loose
With any oath; may be, for aught I know,
My very true, sworn subject, on proviso,
Till you're absolved by bull into a traitor!
Becket. His Holiness can ne'er absolve, except
To save or serve the Church—

Henry. Yes, you may lead
The winds with loyal oaths, to place your heart
Between mine and all stabbers, yet, even now,
Bear in one sleeve a perjury to kill kings,
And in the other a poison!

Becket. My dear liege!—
This is uncharitable.

Henry. To serve the Church!
To serve the Church, man!—did the Romish altar

Burn for thy sovereign, as a sacrifice,
Thou'rt bound to slaughter him!—O Thomas! Thomas!
Could I ever think that thou wouldst pierce the heart
Of thy kind, loving, generous, royal master?

Becket. Not generous now, to say I'd pierce thy heart!
Henry. Thou hast done so!—if not with knife or brand,
With keen-cold weapon of ingratitude,
More poignant still!—But 'tis no matter: go!
There is a gulf as wide as heaven from hell
Between us, across which 'tis vain to think
Of ever shaking hands!—I am thy enemy,
To thy perdition or my own!

Becket. I know it,
So would betake me into banishment,
And save a sacrifice unto thy soul.
Henry. Good man!—Thou wouldst betake thyself to Louie,
To the French court, which breeds intrigues,
Fast as Lutetian filth breeds vermin vile,
Against my kingdom.—Twice thou hast fled thither,
But that the roaring winds, our rough allies,
Forbade thy ship to fetch and carry treason!
My very seas rose up, upon my side,
Against thy steps!—Stay and be baited here,
Till thy proud dewlaps drop with sweat and foam!—
As a first humblyment, thy goods and chattels
Be all confiscate for contempt of court
And breach of fealty, in not attending
Our summons, when John Marschal appeal'd thee
About the manour of Pageham—

Becket. On that summons
I, being sick, sent four good household knights
To plead for me. Was this contempt? Was this
Devoir left unperformed?—Yea, when the cause
Itself, was weigh'd at mine own spiritual Court
In scales which might have dropp'd from Libra stars,
As nice as Conscience trims with trembling hand—
Henry. Ha! ha!

Becket. Sir! Sir! 'tis truth; and he who hero
By royal subornation brings that cause,
Would blush for it,—but before this grave Council,
Like it iniquitous!

[*The Barons start up, and Becket's train advance. Becket
raises his Crozier and Henry his Scripture between them.*

Henry. These sacred wands,
Not unappointed swords, decide the fray!
Archbishop, from thy last words, if no more,
I see thou art a self-devoted man
Unto destruction imminent!—Take your way.

It is almost superfluous to point out how, in
this fine and forcible scene, the passion of his
subject lifts the author above those quips and
conceits of language, amongst which he dallies,
in other portions of his work, somewhat too
fondly. But in simplicity and fluency of style,
'Becket' is a great advance upon 'Sylvia'. We
shall now indulge ourselves with two passages
from the mouth of John of Salisbury—who ever
and anon appears throughout the sad and stormy
tale, breathing the language of poetry and con-
templative repose—to prove how thoroughly our
author has fair images and melodious cadences
at his call:—

John of S. Why seek we not our calm, secluded cells,
And there in study or dim meditation
Consume the soul-improving hours? Let death
Come when it will, and how it will, what matter?
Sines it will come at last!—these mad tumults
Of the outer world, what are they unto us
But noise of Centaurs and of Savages
Fighting ev'n at their feasts!—For idle Courts,
The mountain-shaded moors where nothing stirs
Save the wild daffodil or crisped fern
Or long lithe bloom that flows with every breeze,
Or thistlebeard scarce wafted on, less make
A melancholy desert unto me:
The murmuring branches and the flowers that kiss
Each other's ear in talk, please me far more
Than whisperers of follies, hearers of them,
Or those who lay their fond heads on your neck
But to void scandalous venom there at ease:
For blustering camps, I love the liquid brawl
Of rivulets, the caw of rooks, much better;
Yea, than the lisp of a Circæan dame
Or babble of a living doll, had rather
Hear the soft winnowing of a pigeon's wing
As it doth circle round its dove-cote o'er me;
And find this challenge proud of trumps would change
For sound of shepherd pipe or village bell:
Wouldst thou not, Peter?

Once more John of Salisbury loquiter:—

Farewell, sweet Woodstock bowers! blissful shades,
Through whose dim walks, so pleasantly perplexed,
Oftt have I wander'd, shadow-like myself!
Where with the finer spirits of the place
Communing, I have felt the bonds of earth
Fall gradual from about me, and it seem'd
Leave me at length mere soul, that purest state
Which man's last hope aspires! Farewell, ye lawns,
Ye silent meadows green, whose golden flowers
Breathe up rich vapour as floats o'er the fields
Of sun-fed asphodel. Ye willow streams,
By whose wild banks my thoughts and I have stray'd;
Ye verdurous alleys, down whose turfless sward
My foot has met no mossy obstacle
To wake me from my dream, while brow to book,
I walk'd oblivious of all else, yea letting
The insensible hours steal from me,—fare ye well!
I must no longer see thee, Woodstock! haply

Never again! nor even my native shores!
"Not patrie fines et dulcia linguinis arva."
Alas, what difference sees the selfsame day,
Or moment, in the fates of different men!
Lo! for proof present, where from happy bowers,
Throng'd down that jocund crowd unto the barge
Buoyant herself, light dancing on the wave,
Spreading her broad skirts to each errant wind
And flaunting her gay ribbons as a lure
For every amorous Zephyr. There they crowd,
Minstrels and all, each voice and instrument,
Their very laughter shouts of firm command,
And cries of haste, and feigned shrieks of fear
At the unstable element,—all tuned
To one high note of joy: like manor swans,
Bright wantons of the water, every islet
Is still their home; they sail from home to home,
And turn at eve, tired with their plashy play,
Unto that home's dear homestead, their green nest.
But dolorous John must far away to France,
With none save Poverty for his guide, and Scorn
For his close follower. Well! 'tis Heaven's will,
And I submit mine. Farewell, Lady Rose,
My pupil and my anxious patroness;
Would that I were even sure of seeing thee
Once more, wherever!—*Fale, vale, inquit Johannes!* [Exit.

The 'Nina Sforza' of Mr. Troughton, is done
in colours as different from those of the poem
with which it is here associated, as those of
England from those of Italy—as the dim gran-
deur of Canterbury's minister, from the fantastic
splendours of the Piazza di San Marco, or the
palaces of Genoa the Superb. Mr. Troughton's
drama, too, is naturally far nearer a stage-play
than Mr. Darley's; and still, from faults in its
construction, hardly eligible for the stage. We
know not how better to describe its story com-
pensively, than by saying that there is a touch
of Juliet's passionate, trustful, all-absorbing
Italian love, in the early scenes of Nina Sforza's
girlhood, which prepares her for a despair, ter-
rible but not fierce, when she is worked upon by
Spinola, the Iago of the legend, not only to
admit, but to behold the falsehood and infidelity
of him to whom she has given her whole heart;
for, unlike Iago's machinations, those of Spinola
are based upon truth. The reader shall see her
under both aspects,—first, tutored by her duenna,
the scene Venice:—

*Nina and Brigitta Sforza, at their broodery frames. Nina
sitting at her tambour, but gazing intently out at the
window.*

Brig. How get you on? Is the rose cover'd yet?
'Tis time, I think. Well, Nina! Dost thou hear?
Nina. One moment, madam.

Brig. What art gazing at
With such a fix'd attention?
Nina. 'Tis a bark,
Than which a fairer never dash'd bright gems
Out of the riven bosom of the wave.

Brig. I see it not.
Nina. Not see it! There it flies;—
There—by the Buentoro—there—there—oh!

'Tis past an hour!
How she does rise, and sink, and bound, and bow,
And mock the anger of the creaming sea,
That fights and yawns for her! Look how she grasps
Within the snowy hollow of her wings,
Her other baffled enemy, and makes
The night, with which he strives to injure her,
A friendly aid to waft her on her way!
Well done! Well done! Oh, I do know some things
That creep the earth, which have less life in them
Than thou, thou merry ocean traveller!

Brig. How now! All this about a casual boat!
Are they so scarce in Venice?
Nina. No, indeed!
I have seen boats enough, and little else.

Brig. Why single out this one feluca, then?
Nina. I cannot tell. Perhaps it was because,
As I was sitting prison'd at my frame,
With wandering eyes,—and thoughts more wand'ring still—
Looking upon the bosom of the sea,
A sloping sunbeam pierced the silv'ry mist
That clings about the waters, where they kiss
Th' uncertain rim of yonder sapphire skies,
And gave it on the sudden to my sight—
Brightness in shadow like a smile in grief.

From then till now, when, with abated speed,
With sails braill'd up, and taper masts erect,
It glides into the bay, I've watched its course,
Its coming seem'd to mix up with my thoughts;
And when I saw it hold its yeasty way,
Despite impediments, methought it seem'd
The very type of bounding liberty.
Fairy-like thing, my spirit yearns to thee!
I would I knew thy inmates! I am sure
They must be gentle. Such a slender bark
Bears not the sunburn'd fisher to his prey.
Brig. Nina!

Madam. Come from the window sill.
Look in my face. You're strangely alter'd, girl,
In the last year.

Nina. There is no help for that,

One must grow, madam. Did you hope these walls,—
They're kept enough, 'tis true—your bolts, your bars,
Would keep out nature? One must grow, good aunt.

Brig. This is rare!
What, you'd be free to jostle in the squares!—
The public gardens? Sit at balconies.
To pelt each am'rous, paper-faced gallant
With candied raisins, would ye?—Yes! you'd have
Your velvet-coated gondolier, too,
To skim ye up and down the swarn'd canals
At carnivals; to make your froward face
As common as the columns? Yes, you'd have
As you float past, each ragged beggar cry,
"That's Sforza's mettled daughter, she who leads
When the dogs weds the ocean, and at all
The public ceremonials!"—You would be
The talk of Venice, mistress, would you not?

Nina. I ask for liberty, not licence, madam.
Brig. No doubt, no doubt!—Oh, you'd be wondrous sage!
Come now; let's hear. Suppose that you were free
To have your will; what were your first desire?
Nina. To see the world, whereof, there's something here
Informs me, I am part.

Brig. And what to seek?
Brig. Heyday! This mends apace!
What! there is nothing then to love at home?
Your father, girl, is nothing?

Nina. Nor your aunt?
Oh! yes, believe me, there you do me wrong.
For all his sternness, ne'er did maiden love
Her father more devotedly than I.
Nor is my auntie little in my thoughts.
And that she knows, although 'tis now her cue
To seem to doubt. But for all that, my heart
Is not used up; there still is room in it
For many likings and for one more love!
Ah me! I would not use the merest brute
As I am used! Look here. Without the sash
I've hung my golden warbler where the sun
May fall upon his plumage, scarce less bright!—
Can the lips sing and yet the heart be sad?
I cannot sing of late. If I begin,
I fall a weeping. He will pipe all day:
He could not do this were he not content.
Brig. And yet he is a prisoner.

Nina. Not so, aunt!
He, like his mistress, was to bondage born;
But, there unlike, with no informing mind
To whisper morning, evening, noon, and night,
How sweet's the breath that's drawn in liberty!
Yet what he could not feel, I for him felt.
'Tis not long since that I withdrew his wires,
Set wide the door, and gave him to the air.
But he, not finding any of his kind,
Being unused to space, and much too fine
To pick a scanty meal of casual fare,
Remember'd how his mistress tended him,
And sought his cage again. And so should I!—
Now do, good madam, prithee let us go
And see if that he really good or not,
Which looks so like it, on the smooth lagoon.

In the next passage, she is to be seen writhing
within the coils of the serpent:—

Enter Spinola and Nina, muffled.

Spinola. More speed! More speed! We yet shall be too late.

Nina. Is it a festival?

Spin. Again! Fye! fye!

Will thou recede again? Let's haste! Let's haste!

Nina. And do we not, then? Why, to me it seems

That we outstrip the marten on the wing;

Beat the light floss that seeds on autumn winds.

I feel the air upon my forehead part.

As on the prow of ships the waters do!

Do we not haste? You see I sink with haste.

I must pause here.

Spin. Bear up; 'twill soon be past.

Nina. If Heav'n had ta'en but one all-precious sense,

It would have humbled, but not crush'd me thus!—

Yes! Had it quench'd the quick perceiving eye;

That sees the sweets of summer when they bloom;

The stars; kind faces; all things beautiful;

At least, I should have heard him say he loved!

Or had it been the ear, that to the soul

Conveys the natural music of the grove;

And language, thought's most sure interpreter,

I could have seen him smile, and been content!

But to lose all at once, in losing that

Which was the life of all—alas! alas!—

Is more than I can bear!

Spin. Nay, then, let's home;

For now I see thy constancy is gone.

What matters it? Perhaps 'twere better so.

Let him unseen enjoy

Nina. No, no; let's on!

Spin. Hush! There's no need; for see, thou much-

wrong'd wife—

See where beneath you wall thy husband comes:

Did ever felon to a pinfold creep

With such a gait and air! Is that the grace,

The easy carriage, that amazed the gay,

And fix'd the glances of the whole saloon?

Yet that is he!—Have I belied him now?

Nina *(gazing intently off the scene)*.

Not that way, Ionia; not— and yet he turns!—

Oh, sinking death!—fast coming, cold despair!

I gratefully!—Ah, he stops! Thank Heav'n!

Stand thou for ever fix'd, as yet unstrain'd,

If thou canst not repent, be marble, love;

And I will build about thee holy walls,

And live upon my knees before that form,

Though lost, still loved! still honor'd!—Do not stir!
My heart is in the pavement!—Do not move!—
Or, if thou must, pass by that hateful door!—
Pass! Pass! Pass!—Ah!

Spin. Hush! hush! Thou wilt be heard!
Content thee, thou shalt have most rare revenge;
Why dost thou watch that closed and bolted door,
And stand thus tranced?—Thou dost not hope thy
glance
Will pierce the oaken screen?—All's done.—How now!
Her mind is drawn to one engrossing point;
And out of that, she has no sense, nor life—
This must not be. The guard will soon go round.
Arouse thee! Come!—'Tis vain. If I am seen,
All's told at once. To leave her here alone
Would tell as much! Then, princess, by thy leave!

[Exit, leading her off insensible.]

These fragments have been selected almost at
random; the play contains others more forcible:
but what has been given denotes 'Nina Sforza' to
be well nigh as worthy of public favour, as the
recent 'Loves,' and 'Sea Captains,' whose popu-
larity has been attested by "the slope of wet
faces in the pit,"—that blessing most earnestly
coveted by all whose life is made uneasy by dra-
matic ambitions.

The Letters of Horace Walpole, Earl of Orford.
New edit. Vol. II. 1744—1753. Bentley.

"WITH all the divinity of wit, it goes out of
fashion like a farthingale. I avoid talking be-
fore the youth of the age as I would dancing be-
fore them: for if one's tongue don't move in the
steps of the day, and thinks to please by its old
graces, it is only an object of ridicule, like Mrs.
Hobart in her cotillion."—*Strawberry Hill,*
April 15th, 1768.

It must have been for the apothegm that
the brilliant Horace—himself so enthusiastic
a lover of grandmother-graces, so eager a re-
viver of religious Art, in the midst of England's
quasi-philosophic age—could commit to poster-
ity such a querulous fallacy as the above. The
farthingale of the Lely and Kneller beauties is
in fashion again—"the whirling of Time brings
about its revenges." "Mrs. Hobart's cotillion"
may, at this instant, for aught dancers know, be
curtseying on the threshold of Almack's:—and
have we not here proof that "the divinity of wit"
still makes Our Lady of Strawberry, in her lath-
and-plaster cathedral, an object of pilgrimage
to all true devotees—still keeps alive public in-
terest in him who worshipped her so fervently,
and chronicled his worship so exquisitely?
Nothing, after all, like the Walpole letters!
Lady Caroline Petersham's minced-chicken
supper at Vauxhall—the Chudleigh's equivocal
revels—and "the one china jar cracked by the
earthquake"—once again come before us in this
second volume, ever charming, ever new: thanks
to the most magical epistolary style ever acquired
by practice, or given (on the Dogberry theory)
by Nature. This volume contains but four new
letters, three of which are addressed to Marshal
Conway; the first, very shortly after Walpole
took possession of his toy:—

"To the Hon. H. S. Conway.

"Strawberry Hill, June 27th, 1748.

"Dear Harry,—I have full as little matter for
writing as you can find in a camp. I do not call
myself farmer or country gentleman; for though I
have all the ingredients to compose those characters,
yet, like the ten pieces of card in the trick you found
out, I don't know how to put them together. But,
in short, planting and fowls and cows and sheep are
my whole business, and as little amusing to relate
to any body else as the events of a still-born campaign.
If I write to any body, I am forced to live upon
what news I hoarded before I came out of town;
and the first article of that, as I believe it is in every
body's gazette, must be about my Lord Coke. They
say, that since he has been at Sunning Hill with
Lady Mary, she has made him a declaration in form,
that she hates him, that she always did, and that she
always will. This seems to have been a very un-
necessary notification. However, as you know his
part is to be extremely in love, he is very miserable
upon it; and relating his woes at White's, probably

at seven in the morning, he was advised to put an
end to all this history and shoot himself—an advice
they would not have given him if he were not invol-
ent. He has promised to consider of it. The
night before I left London, I called at the Duchess
of Richmond's, who has stayed at home with the
apprehension of a miscarriage. The porter told me
there was no drawing-room till Thursday. In short,
he did tell me what amounted to as much, that her
grace did not see company till Thursday, then she
should see every body: no excuse, that she was gone
out or not well. I did not stay till Thursday to kiss
hands, but went away to Vauxhall: as I was coming
out, I was overtaken by a great light, and retired
under the trees of Marble Hall to see what it should
be. There came a long procession of Prince Lobko-
witz's footmen in very rich new liveries, the two last
bearing torches; and after them the Prince himself,
in a new sky-blue watered tabby coat, with gold but-
ton-holes, and a magnificent gold waistcoat fringed,
leading Madame l'Ambassadrice de Venise in a
green sack with a straw hat, attended by my Lady
Tyrawley, Wall, the private Spanish agent, the two
Miss Molyneux's, and some other men. They went
into one of the Prince of Wales's barges, had another
barge filled with violins and hautboys, and an open
boat with drums and trumpets. This was one of
the fetes des adieux. The nymph weeps all the
morning, and says she is sure she shall be poisoned
by her husband's relations when she returns, for her
behaviour with this Prince. I have no other news,
but that Mr. Fitzpatrick has married his Sukey
Young, and is very impatient to have the Duchess
of Bedford come to town to visit her new relation.
Is not my Lady Ailesbury weary of her travels?
Pray make her my compliments,—unless she has
made you any such declaration as Lady Mary Coke's.
I am delighted with your description of the bed-
chamber of the House of Orange, as I did not see it;
but the sight itself must have been very odious, as
the hero and heroine are so extremely ugly. I shall
give it my Lady Townshend as a new topic of mat-
rimonial satire. Mr. Churchill and Lady Mary have
been with me two or three days, and are now gone to
Sunning. I only tell you this, to hint that my house
will hold a married pair: indeed, it is not quite large
enough for people who lie, like the patriarchs, with
their whole genealogy, and men-servants, and maid-
servants, and oxes, and asses, in the same chamber
with them. Adieu! do let this be the last letter,
and come home."

The second relates to a visit paid the writer by
the Marshal's infant daughter—the "Missy"—
and Mrs. Damer of after letters—she had been
left with her nurse in his charge while her parents
were in Ireland:—

"Arlington Street, May 5, 1752.

"I now entirely credit all that my Lord Leicester
and his family have said against Lady Mary Coke
and her family; and am convinced that it is impos-
sible to marry anything of the blood of Campbell,
without having all her relations in arms to procure
a separation immediately. Pray, what have I done?
have I come home drunk to my wife within these
four first days? or have I set up gaming all night,
and not come home at all to her, after her lady-
mother had been persuaded that I was the soberest
young nobleman in England, and had the greatest
aversion to play? Have I kept my bride awake all
night with railing at her father, when all the world
had allowed him to be one of the bravest officers in
Europe? In short, in short, I have a mind to take
counsel, even of the wisest lawyer now living in ma-
rimonial cases, my Lord Coke. . . . If, like other
Norfolk husbands, I must entertain the town with a
formal parting, at least it shall be in my own way:
my wife shall neither run to Italy after lovers and
books, nor keep a dormitory in her dressing-room at
Whitehall for Westminster schoolboys, your Freder-
ick Campbells, and such like; nor yet shall she reside
at her mother's house, but shall absolutely set out for
Strawberry Hill in two or three days, as soon as her
room can be well aired; for, to give her her due, I
don't think her to blame, but flatter myself she is
quite contented with the easy footing we live upon;
separate beds, dining in her dressing-room when she is
out of humour, and a little toad-enter that I had got
for her, and whose pockets and bosom I have never
examined, to see if she brought any *billets-doux* from

Tommy Lyttelton or any of her fellows. I shall follow her myself in less than a fortnight; and if her family don't give me any more trouble,—why, who knows but at your return you may find your daughter with qualms, and in a sack? If you should happen to want to know any more particulars, she is quite well, has walked in the park every morning, or has the chariot, as she chooses; and, in short, one would think that I or she were much older than we really are, for I grow excessively fond of her."

The third, from its subject—pigs and old china—would have made Charles Lamb's mouth water: there is the genuine gusto for "the true brown edge" and "the old original wheatsheaf" in every line of it:—

"Strawberry Hill, November 8th, 1752.

"Dear Harry,—After divers mistakes and neglects of my own servants and Mr. Fox's, the Chinese pair have at last set sail for Park place: I don't call them boar and sow, because of their being fit for his altar: I believe, when you see them, you will think it is Ziechi Miechi himself, the Chinese god of good eating and drinking, and his wife. They were to have been with you last week, but the chairman who was to drive them to the water side, got drunk, and said, that the creatures were so wild and unruly, that they ran away and would not be managed. Do but think of their running! It puts me in mind of Mrs. Nugent's talking of just jumping out of a coach! I might with as much propriety talk of having all my clothes let out. My coachman is vastly struck with the goodly paunch of the boar, and says, it would fetch three pounds in his country; but he does not consider, that he is a boar with the true brown edge, and has been fed with the old original wheatsheaf: I hope you will value him more highly: I dare say Mr. Cutler or Margas would at least ask twenty guineas for him, and swear that Mrs. Dunch gave thirty for the fellow. As you must of course write me a letter of thanks for my brawn, I beg you will take that opportunity of telling me very particularly how my Lady Aylesbury does, and if she is quite recovered, as I much hope. How does my sweet little wife do? Are your dragons all finished? Have the Coopers seen Miss Blandy's ghost, or have they made Mr. Cranston poison a dozen or two more private gentlewomen? Do you plant without rain as I do, in order to have your trees die, that you may have the pleasure of planting them over again with rain? Have you any Mrs. Clive that pulls down barns that intercept your prospect; or have you any Lord Radnor that plants trees to intercept his own prospect, that he may cut them down again to make an alteration? There! there are as many questions as if I were your schoolmaster or your godmother! Good night."

Other of Walpole's letters to Marshal Conway more evidently display the generous heart of their writer, and the unceasing enthusiasm with which the virtuoso interested himself in the General's fortunes; but few bear more sprightly and explicit traces of the "sweet," not Roman, but "ruffled hand" of the correspondent. We await with impatience the coming volumes, to which the amount of contributions, hitherto unpublished, will be much larger.

The Political Economy of the Middle Ages, in three books, which treat of their Political, Moral, and Economic Condition. By the Cavaliere Luigi Cibrario—[*Della Economia Politica del Medio Evo, &c. &c.*] Turin. London, Rolandi.

It was to little purpose that the late Emperor of Austria desired to confine the education of his Italian subjects to mere reading and writing: what had been had been; and over the past, despotism itself had no power. A stroke from the pen of the King of Sardinia, it is true, annihilated, within his dominions, the legislation of the revolution; and Louis dix-huit dated his reign from its *de jure* commencement: but the revolution did not the less survive in its consequences; and it was the fruitful parent of hundreds of stubborn facts, which rendered the "*sic volo, sic jubeo*" of the Holy Alliance, as weak and ineffectual as the

scream of a spoiled infant. Thus, in spite of the restrictive policy of twenty-five years, the northern provinces of Italy are, at this moment, wide awake: there exists a movement of mind among its population, which is every day becoming more rapid and diffusive; and the present transition state of that country may be regarded as already approaching to its close. Of this movement, the publication of a volume, like the present, in the good city of Turin may be taken as a pregnant illustration. From the opera libretto, to the volume of science—from cecicism to political philosophy, the stride is not small; and its possibility indicates a strange change in the dreams of despotic power. On this account, alone, we should be disposed to consider the Cavaliere Cibrario's work with a favourable eye, but it has other claims on attention. It is not, as might be supposed, a dry book of statistics, but rather a bird's eye view of the origin and development of the whole of the institutions which sprang out of the ruins of Roman civilization, and of which those parts that come within the English meaning of political economy, form but a subordinate portion. But then the bare fact of considering history at Turin, in its relation to the people, is sufficiently remarkable, and there is a further interest for the English reader in following the traces of dexterity and management, occasionally employed by the author to pass a bitter truth under euphemistic expressions, and to advance public opinion, without shocking weaker brethren, or disturbing the complacency of the public authorities. We cannot, it is true, assert, after the many researches which have already been made into the antiquities of our existing civilization, that the author has much additional light to throw on the subject; but, in clearness and brevity of exposition, and, in a certain philosophical lucidity in his ideas, he may lay considerable claims to an Englishman's perusal.

One great source of this excellence will be found in his rising above the common and vulgar error of considering the Middle Ages as owing nothing to the civilization which preceded them, and springing at once out of absolute anarchy and utter barbarism. "To form a clear idea of history," the author tells us in his preface, "the succession of time, from the commencement to the end of the world, should be considered as a single fact; and the successive races of man as forming a single individual. In the order of time there are no gaps and discontinuities: nor do the generations of men admit of intervals which clearly divide them. There is a rapid and incessant revolution of both, forming a continued stream; and what one age commences, another brings to perfection; so that they all contribute (some more, some less,) mostly without knowing, and often without willing it, to fill out the one great fact which God has willed, and which may be summed up in the single word, *world*." This transcendental and rather Germanized formula, involves a simple, but a pervading idea; namely, that in the moral, as in the physical world, effects are proportionate to their causes; and that the children of each generation are as much indebted for their moral peculiarities to the intellectual conditions of the society into which they are born, as they are to the constitution of their parents, for their bodily temperament.

To understand, therefore, the rise of a new civilization during the Middle Ages, it is not sufficient to consider the institutes and conditions which the barbarians brought into Southern Europe; it is necessary also, to take into account those which were subsisting, and in activity, at the moment of their arrival among the ancient population. The overthrow of the Western Empire by no means universally implied either the destruction or the enslaving of the entire population.

In Italy and Gaul, more especially, the conquered people bore too large a numerical proportion to the conquering invaders, to admit of their being thus disposed of; and their rights and habits were, to a certain extent, respected. This being premised, it follows of necessity, that their opinions, prejudices, and social institutions could not be wholly extinguished. In the various independent kingdoms which arose after the overthrow of the Roman empire, the numerical proportions between the two races so amalgamating, was not precisely the same; and with the variations in this particular, the degree to which the ancient elements prevailed in the new civilization, also varied. But, independently of numbers, the universal establishment of the Christian religion introduced (in the persons of an educated hierarchy) the instruments for preserving or reviving the results of Roman experience, both in the physical and the moral arrangements of the nascent societies. In whatever was connected with the power of the sword, the policy of the invaders of course prevailed; accordingly, the feudal system of property swallowed up all other modes of tenure; and "no land without its lord" became an established maxim. Even the clergy themselves, all men of peace as they were, held their land subject to a specific service; and it is a consequence of such a tenure, that the bishops, to this day, take their place in Parliament, as Barons of the realm. With respect to the cultivators of the soil, the invasion of the barbarians found them slaves, and left them so; but still the conversion of personal into predial slavery, may be best referred to the habits and prejudices of the conquerors.

One element, obviously derived from the Roman polity, (the municipal institutions,) seems to have changed its character completely under the pressure of circumstances. During the latter periods of the empire, the municipalities had degenerated very much into instruments of fiscal tyranny, and their officers were necessarily odious to the people. But when the Roman financial system was overthrown and abolished, the prestige of fortune and of dissent prevailed; and the intervention of the more wealthy and independent families, which had formerly filled municipal offices, was naturally sought for, under the new regime, wherever the aggregation of men into towns and cities gave the inhabitants a corporate value, and enabled them to exercise a will of their own. Such associations, during the first rudeness of the rising civilization, were altogether voluntary; and the concurrence of the ecclesiastical chief of the locality (for obvious reasons, almost a matter of course,) gave them additional strength and consistency. From these elements arose the organization of communes, according to our author; and it proceeded, he thinks, somewhat in this manner:—

Whatever form of municipality was left standing after the invasion, resolved itself into a voluntary association for local protection, in which the *militæ*, the nobles or freemen, the artisans, and the common people, each participated. In the greater cities it is probable that the more powerful proprietors (the barons) were occasionally admitted into the league. These associations were, in their origin, only temporary, and for specific purposes,—of which Genoa affords an instance; but they gradually became perpetual. In the beginning, too, they were more aristocratic than democratic, though they soon more or less assumed a popular character.

To commerce and to this spirit of association the author attributes whatever was great and good in the institutions of the Middle Ages; and the Hanseatic League exhibits the system in its fullest development.

Of these three elements—Feudality, or the power of the sword—Ecclesiastical influence, or the power of education and opinion,—and Municipal influence, or the power of wealth and com-

bination,—the modern system of society has been built up; and the progressive development of each of these forces, and the mode in which each race contributed to the result, in the various States of Italy, is described by the author in his first book, with considerable clearness and ability.

The second book treats of the moral condition of the Middle Ages under the heads of the Influence of religious ideas, religious orders, charitable institutions, customs and manners, private life, feasts, literature, arts and sciences. In this department, Sig. Cibrario has been compelled to dwell more on the details of aristocratic and courtly life, than on that of the people; and in this, like many other similar books, the work is most deficient, where rational curiosity is the strongest. It is clear from the MS. authorities he quotes, that the archives of Italy contain documents which would throw strong lights on the condition of the masses: but public attention requires to be more steadily directed towards their investigation.

Starting from the tenth century, which is taken as one of universal corruption and anarchy, the author sums up the progress of civilization in Italy in the following terms:—

The efforts of the communes to obtain liberty, seconded by the Church, (more through hatred of the tyrants than for a love of freedom), were eminently successful; and, in the meantime, the crusades carried many of the powerful and ferocious barons, and their military followers, to die in Palestine, by which the opportunity for establishing better manners was largely afforded. In the beginning of the thirteenth century, the preaching and example of St. Dominick and St. Francis contributed to soften manners, by promoting an observance of the divine law; but towards the end of that century, the creation of overgrown fortunes, through the exercise of usury, [banking operations, &c.] led to a decay of industry and commerce, and lost Italy the dominion of the sea. This corruption increased during the fourteenth century, until the period when the reformation of Luther and of Calvin showed the necessity of a thorough and true Catholic reform, which was somewhat tardily effected by the council of Trent.

In this summary, we think the indirect influence of a Catholic and despotic atmosphere is very apparent, especially in the allusion to usury. Allowing, as much as possible to the establishment of the new monastic orders, and the influence of their founder's enthusiasm, Signor Cibrario must, we imagine, be well aware that the existence of such establishments was a mere consequence of the temper of the times, leading to construct and consolidate society. Tyranny, and the manifold miseries which tyranny brings in its train, were, from the beginning, more than overmatched by the tenacity of human instincts, by the yearning of man after social development. As soon as any conquering party sat itself down, and its chiefs became proprietors, the desire for enjoyment took the lead. Hence traffic and a gradual diffusion of wealth, and with these came the desire, or rather the necessity, for better institutions. The general prevalence of brute force, and the coarse indulgence in the worst vices of unquestioned power also, by a sort of polarity, tended to beget enthusiasts for order and for virtue, constituting those rare exceptions, justly called great men, whose personal influence goes so far in unsettled times. These were not confined to the church, but were found in the republics, and wherever a field was opened for their exertions. As property is the great end of association, so is it its principal means; and it was the reconstitution of this element, and its multiplication by commerce, that hastened forward the civilization of Italy.

Of the interval embraced by these operations, the author thinks the thirteenth century displays the virtues of a barbarous people, and the fourteenth exhibits the corruptions of civilization.

About the year 1300 we witness an equal abuse of physical force, as before, but less loyalty and good faith. Conjugal fidelity was disregarded, and the condition of bastardy scarcely a matter of reproach. Barnabas and Galeazzo Visconti in Milan, and Peter the Cruel in Spain, were the first to raise the condition of a mistress to the honours and respect of a lawful wife; nor was this scandal rare among the priests.

This, however, applies most strictly to the feudal families, (then falling into the yellow leaf,) and to the church. The people must have progressively and rapidly increased in morality and intelligence.

The influence of chivalry the author properly considers as having been more potent in refining manners than in improving morals. Among the debasing causes which operated during the fourteenth century, are enumerated the fraudulent practices of the governments in respect to the public coin. This vice introduced that of private forgery; and it is worth remark that the private coiners, less dishonest than those whose impress they falsified, often issued money less alloyed than the general currency.

Among the vices of this age were the sale of public offices, and the licence and abuses of the public service, the extraordinary cruelty of penal inflictions, and the prevalence of assassination as a means of private justice. "Vengeance was then a passion as violent as love." This was aggravated by the treachery with which it was pursued; for the abominable cruelties of the petty tyrants of Italy were responded to by an equal ferocity in the insurgent people. The use of torture in judicial proceedings among the Romans was, in the flourishing times of the empire, confined to slaves: but, in the decline, it was extended also to free men; and the church, in founding their canon law on the Roman jurisprudence, multiplied the absurd atrocity in the new civilization, and kept it alive, even to the French Revolution.

We cannot follow the author through his gossiping details of the domestic manners of the middle ages. He denies (and we think with justice) that commerce introduced luxury and extravagance into Italy. The merchants he affirms long sold their expensive importations to the nobility and the court, and were themselves sober, modest, and moderate in their dress and habits of life. The ravaging plagues which desolated Europe during the fourteenth century, contributed to the propagation of excess and extravagance, by the unexpected successions which devolved to the poorer classes. Articles of dress being then made with a view to a considerable duration, the finery of the deceased was worn by their humbler successors; and the old families encouraged the invention of all sorts of refinements, to escape from this invasion of the *nouveaux riches*.

To such a degree were modes thus multiplied, that in one single miniature, among the illuminations of a French paraphrase of the treatise *De Civitate Dei*, written in the fourteenth century, and preserved in the royal archives of the court, [qy. at Turin?] six different sorts of coverings for the head may be counted; and the variety of women's head-dresses, hoods, handkerchiefs, bonnets, caps, &c., it would require a large book, or rather a collection of designs, to describe.

To give some idea of the varieties of cloth, then fabricated in France and Flanders, the author furnishes a list of articles, bought for mourning by the court of Savoy, when the body of Amaduis VI., who died in La Puglia, was brought back to his capital.

The widowed Countess, besides black satin for the altar of the chapel, and for the pillows of the chamber, and a black silk cloth, bought Beauvais black to cover the bed of her son, Amaduis VII.,—black of S. Marcello, for a frock for his use,—three sorts of black serge, for hanging the walls,—black cloth of St. Lo, to cover the benches,—black of

Bernay for the saddles and harness,—black of Douay, of Provence, of S. Giaima, of Besex, of Pontoise, of Aubenton, of Bourges, of Gigniat, for herself, for her daughter-in-law, for her knights, ladies, &c.,—and lastly, black of Mont Pinçon, for her game-keepers,—*gros negret* de Tarantasia for the messengers,—black of Troyes for the heralds and minstrels; and for other uses the black of Euroux and Seuteron. The dearest of these cloths was the Douay, which cost 3s. (*soldi*) the ell; the cheapest cost 9d. (*danari*). The *negret* of Tarantasia was given for four.

Under the head of literature we find the following particulars, which are worthy of extract:

The material fabrication of a book was, before the invention of printing, the work of many hands. One person was employed as the amanuensis, to transcribe, leaving the capitals and the spaces for future ornament, blank. Another was the corrector, who revised the manuscript and added the punctuation. The third was the illuminator of the capital letters and ornaments. A fourth executed the figures. Originally, however, these were all the performance of one and the same person. Of the many painters who worked in this department, the names of a few only are known; though, after the time of Dante, who celebrates Oderigi da Gubbio, and Franco Bolognese, the art had arrived at great perfection. The most celebrated miniaturists were Simon Memmi, who painted Petrarch's Laura, D. Silvestro, a Camaldolite monk, who illuminated the church books of the Convent degli Angeli, in Florence,—the Monk dell' Isola d'Oro Genovese,—Attavante Fiorentino, who illuminated the famous Silius Italicus, for some time in the church of St. John and St. Paul, at Venice,—St. Catherine Vigni, of Bologna,—Gerardo and Bonardino, Florentines,—Pietro da Perugia, Liberale da Verona. But the most famous of all was a Fleming, D. Julius Clovius, a disciple of Raffael, who in the minutest figures preserved all the beauty of that school. Clovius was himself at the head of a school, and amongst his most distinguished scholars were Bartol. Torre, a noble of Arezzo, and Bernardo Bontalenti delle Girandole, a Florentine. In the sixteenth century, Giambattista Castello, a Genovese worked with great excellence upon the books in the Escorial, and Andrea da Leone Girolameta was not inferior to Clovius. Gian Paolo Cerva, a Bolognese, flourished about the same time, and was imitable for his birds: also Francesco Mezzo, a Milanese, who was a pupil of Leonardo da Vinci, Cesare Pollino, of Perugia, and the two Scorzas, Genovese. Of the two latter, Giambattista delighted to paint insects, flies, ants, spiders, and butterflies, and was in the service of Philip II. Sinibaldo, the other brother, was introduced by the poet Marino to the court of Savoy, from which he received fifty scudi per month. Giambattista Stephaneschi copied in miniature some works of Andrea del Sarto, Raffael, Titian, and Correggio. Besides these were Janet, Cooper, Guernier, Van Deynum, Sigismondo Laite, who drew upon precious stones, Bernard, Ramelli, a Piedmontese, Rosalba Curriera, &c.

The third book treats on those objects which belong more properly to what we term political economy: on the effect of institutions on agriculture and industry—on police regulations for the public health, fabrics, corn, the preservation of the peace, for the regulation of gaming and of the stews—on the conditions of property—on population—on finance—on the monetary system—and on the means of determining the value of money according to the quantity of the metal and the rate of articles of consumption.

We have not left ourselves space to enter on this part of the volume, which we the less regret, because we do not think Signor Cibrario on a level in all respects with the opinions beyond the Alps. His pages, however, are full of curious local details on the various subjects he treats of, which give a peculiar colour to his work, and bestow upon it an interest beyond the dry technical value of his views. His opinions of men and things are generally influenced by his position as an Italian Catholic, and the subject of a despotic monarchy, as we have taken occasion to notice; but he perpetually bursts through the

bonds with which he is environed. In general, and throughout all Italy, the men are better in proportion as institutions are worse. To shut out the lights of Europe from the peninsula, is obviously impossible; and the powerful mind, excluded from its proper sphere in active life, finds exercise in a more penetrating research of truth, and a more rigorous application of principles, in proportion to the obstacles opposed to their influence. Piedmont, moreover, was for a long time incorporated with France, and had Paris for its political and social capital. The restoration, therefore, found the public mind imbued with science, and the schools and universities filled with master spirits. Some of them, indeed, were dispersed by the restored government, or reduced to silence and a safe inactivity; but that the flame is not extinguished, is proved by the work before us.

It is very clear from internal evidence, that the author prides himself most especially upon his attempt to deduce the true value of the currency of the middle ages; and the method he follows seems to us well calculated to lead to an accurate solution. This part of the work is illustrated with five tables of the prices of grain, a table of the money of Italy, France, Germany, England, and the East, during the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, with their present value in metal and in wheat; and lastly by eight tables of the prices of labour, salaries of officers, and prices of very many articles of art and of mechanic industry.

The Memoirs of Madame Malibran. By the Countess de Merlin, and other intimate friends. With a selection from her Correspondence, and notices of the progress of the Musical Drama in England. 2 vols. Colburn.

EVERY one has heard the anecdote of the Italian nobleman who made his whole household dine upon one egg,—the yolk apportioned to himself and La Contessa, the white to the children, the shells and the broth to the domestics. The editor and translator of Madame Merlin's sketches of Malibran has attempted a like feat. A few flimsy French pages are served up to the public in the delusive form of a couple of volumes; their flimsiness being eked out by feeble and irrelevant sketches of the progress of Opera in England—by obituary notices from various sources, among which our own journal figures prominently, and by contemporary anecdotes, gathered together on the principle of the Rich Man's guests in the parable, that is, from the hedges and highways. By a remarkable exercise of ingenuity, the editor seems to have overlooked one of the cleverest papers on the genius and early story of Malibran hitherto published: this appeared in Mr. Colburn's Magazine, and, if we recollect right, contained some details of the severe vocal practice to which the heroine was subjected in her early days, more intelligent and less vague than those wonderful stories of her father's ferocity in tuition, so widely circulated:—though the latter, as being the most marvellous, are the most likely, it would seem, to take their place in the annals of music by the side of the anecdotes of Salieri having administered acqua tofana to Mozart, and of the latter having been visited by a supernatural client on the melancholy occasion of his commencing the Requiem! Nothing, in short, can be more childish and unsatisfactory than the concoction of this book. The style is the true Boaden slip-slop; the very orthography defective:—names, without number, are spelt wrong, thus Colbrand for Colbran, Pizzaroni for Pisaroni, "*La Freschetena*" for La Frascatana—but enough of the editor and translator.

There are some faces, such as Napoleon's or Wellington's, so marked, that even on the image tray of the Savoyard, or when hung up in coarsest red and green on the cottage wall, the characteristic lineaments shall reveal themselves too clearly to be mistaken. Thus, though nothing can be less philosophical, or more barren of delicate observation than Madame Merlin's notes on her friend, they still (to carry out the simile) offer such outlines and patches of colour as indicate an original, highly gifted, and capriciously-willed woman—a strange mixture of gipsy impulse and sibylline enthusiasm, of high-heartedness and frivolity, with "some lively touches" of Cleopatra and La Gabrielli and Bettina in her composition—her generosity strangely chequered by an exacting vanity, which made her unjust and invidious towards others (see her account of Madame Merie Lalonde, which we shall presently give,)—her restless gaiety darkened by superstitious presentiment—her brilliant genius dragged down from the sublime heights to which it could rise, by freaks and caprices, which all but degraded the Pythonesse into a buffoon. Such a character as this, with the bright and the dark, the majestic and the eccentric, so inextricably mingled, Madame Merlin has neither range of vision to contemplate, nor grasp of hand to pour-tray: add to this, that the memorialist constantly interposes herself, in the earnestness of her desire to figure as patroness and virtuosa. Yet, though of such a being as we have sketched there are scattered intimations throughout her pages, it is impossible for us to find many passages worthy of extract; still less, on reviewer's notice, to supply the requisite links of anecdote or the lights and shades of character to entitle the book to the name of a biography. Two or three fragments, however, may be given as illustrative of Malibran's musical skill, her manifold caprices, and the contempt alike of reason, of difficulty, and pain, which distinguished her:—

"One of her early performances was marked by an amusing incident. She had to sing with Velluti a duo in Zingarelli's *Romeo e Giulietta*. In the morning they rehearsed it together, and at that rehearsal, as at all preceding ones, Velluti, like an experienced stager, sang the plain notes of his part, reserving his *fortituri* for the evening, in the fear that the young debutante would imitate them. Accordingly, at the evening performance, Velluti sang his solo part, interspersing it with the most florid ornaments, and closing it with a new and brilliant cadence, which quite enchanted the audience. The *musico* cast a glance of mingled triumph and pity on poor Maria, as she advanced to the stage lamps. What was the astonishment of the audience to hear her execute the ornaments of Velluti, imparting to them even additional grace, and crowning her triumph with a bold and superb improvisation. Amidst the torrent of applause which followed this effort, and whilst trembling from the excitement it occasioned, Maria felt her arm rudely grasped as it were by a hand of iron. Immediately the word '*Briecona*!' pronounced in a suppressed and angry tone by Velluti, afforded her a convincing proof that every triumph carries with it its mortification."

"Maria Malibran's nervous temperament and romantic turn of feeling inspired her with a passionate love of flowers. During her performance of *Desdemona*, on the evening of her benefit before alluded to, she betrayed her fondness for flowers in a singular way. When *Desdemona* lay dead on the stage, and the Moor in his frenzied grief was preparing to inflict upon himself the blow which was to lay him prostrate at her side, Madame Malibran, fearing the destruction of the bouquets and wreaths which lay scattered round her, exclaimed in a low tone of voice, 'Take care of my flowers! Do not crush my flowers!'"

This last anecdote is a pretty pendant to Fanny Kemble's:—"You hurt me dreadfully, Mr. Keppel!" (see her American journal); or to the newspaper story of the replenished porter-bottle, kicked by the manager to Malibran's side, as she lay, in seeming and in reality, half dead

on the stage on the first night of Balfe's '*Maid of Artois*,' which enabled her to gain an *encore* for its harassing *finale*. One more green-room story:—

"On one occasion, having passed the whole night at a ball, on her return home, finding she had to play that evening, she retired to bed and slept till noon. On rising, she ordered her saddle horse, galloped off, returned home at six, partook of a hurried dinner, and away to the Opera, where she was to play *Arsace*. Having dressed for the part, she was about to announce her readiness, when, overcome by exhaustion, she fell down in a fainting-fit. In an instant the alarm spread, and assistance was summoned. Twenty different remedies were tried, twenty bottles of perfume and other restoratives proffered, and among others a bottle of hartshorn. In the confusion of the moment, Monsieur Robert (who was terrified out of his senses by this unfortunate occurrence) unluckily seized the hartshorn, and applied it to the lips instead of the nose of the fainting prima donna. Madame Malibran recovered, but alas! the hartshorn had frightfully blistered her lips. Here was an unforeseen misfortune; the house was already filled—the audience were beginning to manifest impatience. It was now too late to change the performance—Monsieur Robert knew not what apology to offer. 'Stay,' exclaimed Madame Malibran, 'I'll remedy this.' Taking up a pair of scissors, she approached the looking-glass, and, though suffering the most acute pain, she cut from her lips the skin which had been raised by the blisters. In ten minutes afterwards she was on the stage singing with Semiramide-Sontag."

An anecdote or two in proof of her generosity and considerate kindness may be worth quoting:

"Malibran, as I believe every one is aware, had a remarkable talent for musical composition. This talent, however, she exercised only for amusement, giving to her friends, or to charities, the pieces she composed. On this occasion Madame de ——— was present: a lady for whom our fair cantatrice had the greatest respect, but whose pecuniary circumstances were deplorably reduced. Willingly would Maria Malibran have assisted her, but the pride of Madame ——— precluded the possibility of a pecuniary offer; she, therefore, resorted to an ingenious little artifice to effect her generous purpose. Madame ———'s son, a lad of sixteen, was present.—'I understand that this young gentleman has a great talent for poetry,' said Madame Malibran to the mother. 'I am going to propose a little speculation between us. Having written six airs for publication, I want words for them; will you undertake to furnish them, and we will divide the profits?'—The proposal was instantly accepted; the young poet produced the verses, and they were sent to Madame Malibran. The songs were never published; but Madame de ——— received six hundred francs as her son's share of the profit arising from them."

"One day a poor Italian refugee applied to Lablache for assistance. He had received permission to return home, but alas! he was destitute of the means. The next day, at rehearsal, Lablache broached the subject of the refugee's distress, and proposed a subscription. Madame Lablache, Donzelli, and several others, subscribed each two guineas. 'And you, Maria,' said Lablache, turning to Madame Malibran, 'what will you give?' 'The same as the rest,' answered she carelessly, and went on practising her part. With this little treasure the charitable and kind-hearted Lablache flew to succour his unfortunate countryman. The next morning Maria took an opportunity to speak to him alone. 'Here are ten pounds more for your poor friend,' said she, slipping a note into his hands: 'I would not give more than the others yesterday, fearing they might think me ostentatious. Take it to him, but do not say a word about it to any one.'"

Malibran is well known to have been a clever artist: her needlework too, so Madame Merlin tells us, was exquisite. Here she figures in another of her Protean aspects, namely, as the *De Seigné* of the Italian corps:—

"My dearest and best Friend,—I determined not to trouble you till I should have something worth writing about, but I cannot now help breaking the ice. Though I have no particular subject to treat

on, yet I feel sure you will be delighted to see my scribble; for I judge from myself, and I know I should be delighted to see yours. I fancy I see you reading these lines, and striking your forehead, whilst you exclaim, 'what strange creatures women are!' They are indeed—I confess it. What can I say more? Let me see if I can think of some little bit of news—I have it; I will give you an account of the *début* of Madame Lalande. I went to the opera with Lady Flint, her husband, and her daughter; and having taken my seat and adjusted my *lorgnette*, I impatiently awaited the entrance of the *Pirato*, who was represented by Donzelli. The overture commenced. Humph! very so so. It is not effective. The curtain rose. The opening scene was pretty, and was loudly applauded. Dramatic authors and composers know how much they owe to the scene-painter. Enter *Il Pirato*. He blustered, and strutted about, sang loudly, enchanted the audience, and was clapped. In acknowledgment of the applause, Donzelli bowed at least thirty times, and continued bowing until he was actually behind the side-scenes. The first air was tolerable. Change of scene. *Venga la bella Italiana*, said I to my little self. I was all impatience, and as she appeared I stretched over the box to catch a glimpse of her. Alas! what a disappointment! Picture to yourself a woman of about forty, with light hair and a vulgar broad face, with an unfavourable expression, a bad figure, as clumsy a foot as my own, and most unbecomingly dressed. The recitative commenced. Her voice trembled so, that none could find out whether it was sweet or harsh. I therefore waited patiently for the cavatina. It commenced, and the prima donna opened her mouth with a long tremulous note. Concluding that this arose from timidity, I could not help pitying her. But, alas! the undulating tones of her voice continued throughout, and utterly spoiled the pretty cavatina. At its conclusion she was vociferously applauded, and made a thousand curtsies, which is the custom in London. Next came the beautiful duet. In this she was just as cold and tremulous as before. In a word, not to weary you with a long account of each morceau, she finished her part in the same bad style in which she began it. She had to sing a very fine air just before the conclusion, where her husband and her lover had been killed. She advanced to the front of the stage, leading in her hand a little child, who would very much have preferred going to sleep to being thus dragged on the stage to hear a lachrymose chant. Madame Lalande sang it without spirit, and consequently produced no effect. Notwithstanding this, she was called for after the fall of the curtain, and received great applause. Yet the general opinion is, that she was very mediocre. '*O rien il meglio*,' as Susanne says: I have discovered that this tremulous style is Madame Lalande's constant habit of singing. It is her fashion—immovable, fixed, eternal! You may therefore guess how well our voices are likely to blend together—two and two, like three goats. Her middle notes are wiry, and have a harsh and shrill effect. The opera contains some good music, but it is decidedly feeble.

Morsels, as interesting as the above, (of their value let the dillatanti decide) appear but sparingly in Madame Merlin's chronicle. Besides these, however, it gives us few glimpses of those eccentric adventures, in which the heroine more than once took part, wearing doublet and hose; and notices of the brilliant success, which in later days attended her appearances on the continent and in England. But the book has no worth or coherence, as a portraiture of character, still less as an artistic record. The second volume, as we have said, is made up of the veriest scissor-work,—done with blunt scissors.

Travels in Koordistan, Mesopotamia, &c. By J. Baillie Fraser, Esq.

[Second Notice.]

Mr. Fraser's account of Baghdad is mainly compiled from Buckingham—but all the dreadful particulars of the devastations of the plague, with which the city and country were visited in 1831, are given from Mr. Grove's published Journal. The political personages, too, who

figure in his pages, are most of them dead; so that what little there is of novelty or interest, relates to manners and appearances. Here is a familiar picture:—

"Riding through the bazaars is, however, a service of some danger. Though forming the common thoroughfares, they are so narrow that you are constantly stopped by trains of loaded camels or mules, the packages on whose backs are apt to break either your head or your knees, according to the height of the passing quadruped; and you have enough to do in steering your course between them and the crowd of ruffian-like Arabs that beset every street and passage. The trains of asses, loaded with wood, reminded me of the lady in the 'Arabian Nights' Entertainments,' who, by falsely attributing the wound in her cheek to a blow from the pannier of one of these animals, endangered the lives of the whole respectable community of wood-drivers; and sundry rents in my trousers, more than once vindicated the plausibility of the lady's tale. I wish I could say that the cooks' shops, in like manner, recalled the image of that of Simmoutapha and his delicious cream-tarts: but, in fact, the smell of rancid butter, and of the frying fat of sheep's tails, was the very reverse of attractive; nor are the confectioners' shops by any means so tempting as those of Constantinople. Among the things which strike a stranger is the imperturbable stillness and apathy, as it seems, with which the Turkish merchant sits on the raised platform at his door, smoking his pipe in the midst of the bustle around him, as if he heard it not, or had nothing of a trader's interest in the sale of his wares. Does a customer approach, he slowly and silently displays the goods required, and serves him if they suit—if not, he smokes on."

Another well-known peculiarity in the streets of Baghdad are the multitudes of wild Arabs, and their intolerable noise—but clamour is, it appears, general:—

"I think," says Mr. Fraser, "of all places I ever was in, it is the most remarkable for every imaginable sort of noise, and its inhabitants the most intolerably obstreperous. The room I now occupy has a balcony over the street, with two windows; so that everything that passes under, is as well heard as if it were going on in the room. Before day I have a concert of cocks and hens from a neighbouring yard; this is followed by the lively beat of the 'reveille' from the Sepoys' quarter, which, in its turn, rouses a host of dogs; these keep up a very industrious running bass of barking, till the donkeys begin to bray. By that time the neighbouring Arabs who have been driven into town by the disturbed state of the country beyond its walls, have shaken their ears, and begin to drive out to pasture the flocks of sheep and herds of cattle and camels they have brought in with them for security. Assuredly Arab sheep and cattle have the deafest ears to the voice of the charmer, of any animals on earth, or they are grievously abused by their drivers: for such a routing and roaring as is made to induce the beasts to move along, I never heard in any other place. * * By that time the rest of the biped inhabitants are astir. The quiet Turk shuffles silently along, nor do the Christians or Jews commit any violent trespass upon the sense of hearing: but there are more Arabs—ay, this street is their great thoroughfare, and here and everywhere they rush along in droves, like the less brutal animals they drive or ride, hallooing to each other and to all they pass, often maintaining a conversation at the top of their tremendous voices, with some equally clear-piped brother, at a quarter of a mile's distance: as for approaching nearer for convenience of communication, they never dream of such a thing; lungs are cheaper than legs, it is clear, at least in Baghdad. Then there is—but I spare you the further detail of town criers, Saints routing out their pealing ejaculations, beggars and fakeers thundering forth their petitions in the name of Allah and the Prophet; and, worse than all, professed singers practising their voices as they pass along. In short, Hatchett's in Piccadilly when all the mails and coaches are under despatch,—Cockspur Street and Charing Cross, when the season is fullest and the cries are loudest,—or Smithfield on a special market-day,—or Billingsgate, or all of these together, must strike, and yield the palm for variety and intensity

of noise, to Baghdad, the true legitimate successor of old Babel!"

Next to the Arabs, the white asses and black negroes are most likely to strike the attention of travellers:—

"For the former," says Mr. Fraser, "there is quite a craze here:—white is your only colour for a donkey, and you scarcely meet any person of respectability, man or woman, mounted on anything else than these spotless quadrupeds—except, indeed, the more warlike classes, who despise anything under the grade of an Arab steed. Most of the learned and holy professions prefer the meeker animal, and so do all the ladies; so that the number in use is very great; and as women of the higher ranks seldom move without a multitude of attendants similarly mounted, when such a visit is made at the house of a neighbour, the braying concert becomes intolerable. These asses are, I believe, of a particular breed, and fetch very high prices—from forty to fifty pounds sterling being no uncommon sum for one of great size, good blood, and fine paces. They are magnificently caparisoned, and every one of the poor animals has its nostrils slit, a practice prevalent also in Persia, and which is said to make them longer winded.—Heaven knows their wind is long enough when they begin to bray. The rage for black slaves here is quite as universal as that for white donkeys, and, judging from appearances, I should suppose that the uglier they are, the more they are valued—like an isle of Skye terrier, whose beauty consists in its especial and perfect ugliness. These dark beauties, male and female, come chiefly from Madagascar and Zanzibar, and are supplied for the most part by the Imam of Muscat—a very staunch and worthy ally of ours, in whose hands nearly all the trade rests. They are all thick-lipped, have broad faces, high cheek-bones, exceedingly depressed noses, small peaked chins, staring white eyes, and atrociously black skins. * * Here you find them greatly preferred to all others as servants, both in the Harem, and for other offices. The streets swarm with them, and their glossy skins, fat shining faces, and gay apparel, lend at once to the conclusion that they fare well; a fact sufficiently notorious from the well-known partiality of Turks, in common with most Orientals, towards their slaves; and the impudent swagger, and not unfrequently insolent language of the dark rogues as they pass you in the street, leaves no doubt of their being the spoiled favourites of some over-indulgent master. The enjoyment of this species of luxury is, however, confined to the faithful, no Christian or Infidel, of whatever cast, being by law permitted to own any slave."

Mr. Fraser gives a minute and not uninteresting account of the Arab tribes of Mesopotamia, from the manuscript journal of a person of the name of Elliot, who resided much among them, and is since dead: but we must pass this, and push on for the ruins of the mighty Babylon. For minute description, the reader is referred to Rennell, D'Anville, Rich, and Buckingham. The following is a summary of Mr. Fraser's observations:—

"On examining the impression left on my mind by what we this day had seen of these ruins, or rather vestiges, of the celebrated Babylon, I find it to be just what I had anticipated. I could have made a drawing of the Mujellibeh from the accounts I had heard of it, and what I had seen of other ruins of a similar character. The Kasr disappointed me sadly in height and lack of imposing appearance—not in extent, for it is more extensive than I imagined; and as for the rest, you might just as well have looked upon any similar extent of rough, barren, irregular ground. The long mounds indicating canals, and branching off to a great distance, were interesting through the ideas they suggested; and there was something striking in the solitude and desert aspect of the *coup d'œil* which was obtained from the summit of the Mujellibeh, that undoubtedly recalled to the spectator's mind the remarkable fulfilment of the numerous prophetic denunciations of divine wrath which we find throughout the Scriptures; but the manner of their being recalled was not so impressive as might be supposed.—Babylon, though utterly ruined, and the haunt of loathsome creatures, is not altogether deprived of the vestiges of man's vicinity—you see villages and date-groves, and cultivation

in various places around, and the walls of Hillah remind one that something of a city exists within view: so that the image of utter desolation is disturbed, and the frame of mind with which the scene is viewed is apt to suffer a corresponding re-action. On the whole, I was certainly deeply interested by the view of these relics of what once was one of the wonders of the world; but as to all those indescribable emotions which travellers seem to hold it a duty to feel in such places, and particularly on this spot, I must plead guilty to a sin against feeling and propriety, if such it be; for truly I experienced little of them. The truth is, that those who are accustomed to scenes of wide-spread barren nature, and whose imaginations have been somewhat dulled by the hard matter of fact realities of life, require something more intrinsically striking and tangible than anything that appears at Babylon, to call forth their enthusiasms; and such, I confess, was the case with me. I was more impressed with the solitary ghastliness of the old city of Eerj, at Vuromeen, near Tebrân, with its old, white, furrowed wall standing almost entire, but utterly tenantless and deserted, than with all I saw this day. The one was like the skeleton of a mighty place—it still retained some fearful connection with humanity—it put one in mind of the terrible spectre ship of Coleridge, which, deserted by her crew, had drifted for years and years over the ocean, till bleached to fearful whiteness by the storms of an unknown period. The other is that skeleton mouldering into dust, which we cannot distinguish from other clay—like the stranded vessel that has rotted on the beach, and whose timbers, already fallen to pieces, suggest no notion of the gallant ship that, long instinct with life, breasted the waves of the ocean."

Next morning the party started for Birs-e-Nimrod:—

"We rode to it over a perfect flat, bordering on a swamp, but all cultivated; and reached its base in little more than two hours, having stopped to shoot at game more than once by the way, so that I estimated the distance at eight miles. The view on the Hillah side is intercepted by the very large mound of Ibrahim-ul-Khaleel. Having cleared that by ascending it or going round its base, the Birs is seen as a lofty irregular pillar, built upon an earthen hill, and rising from a vast level desert; for though there are numerous mounds of various sizes, far and near around it, and the ground is covered with bricks and potsherds, the general surface is as flat as water. The height of mound and pillar, taken together, seemed to me about from one hundred and eighty to two hundred feet; but I understand that this is short of the truth, the former alone rising two hundred feet above the level of the plain, while the latter attains a height of thirty-five feet more; in all two hundred and thirty-five feet. On nearer approach, you discover that this supposed earthen mound is in reality a mass of sun-dried bricks, mingled with fragments of kiln-burnt bricks, of various colours, yellow and red, out of which protrudes a lofty mass of the most exquisite brick masonry possible, which is the pillar aforesaid. To trace the design, or original form, of the structure seems to me impossible; because both top and sides are covered with the debris that ages have caused to moulder down, leaving only the corners of the solid brickwork here and there peeping out. That the complete subversion must have been very ancient appears from this, that the fragments of brick, which now form a sort of M'Adamised pavement over the whole top and upper parts of the sides, are covered with a lichenous coat, like those of an ancient ruin—a very slow process in so dry a climate; and the superiority of the bricks used in the upper part of the structure, to those below, is equally obvious from the fact that the former do not crumble into dust, while the under ones, which are of larger size, do. I saw no sun-burnt bricks used in the centre part of the building, which may be more properly termed the tower. On the south-east side, or that next to Hillah, there is a very large mass, formed of sun-dried bricks, now joined to the lower part of the centre; but to me it appears as if this had originally been distinct, and that it had been united by the washing down of debris, from both having filled up the space between them. There is no corresponding projection on the other sides. But it is on mounting this mass of brick debris that one begins to comprehend the vastness of the original

structure, and the utterness, and extraordinary nature, of the ruin that has overtaken it. On arriving at the summit, you find yourself at the base of a fabric, built, as I have said, of the most singularly beautiful masonry, the bricks being joined with layers of cement, so thin that you are at a loss to understand why you cannot easily separate them from one another; but on trying, you find it next to impossible to do so. This mass, which I estimated at fifty (but which I have since learned is only thirty-five) feet in height, has been rifted in two by a crack through which you can see, and its breadth bears so small a proportion to its height that, were its foundation not connected with the original fabric below, it must long since have given way; as it is, the elements and seasons appear to have little effect upon it, and it defies the yet more destructive hand of man. The most striking objects, I think, of the whole, are the remarkable blackened and partly vitrified masses which lie at the foot of the fragment just described, and which, from the disorder in which they are found, appear to have fallen from some greater height than any that now remains. On examination, you find that they consist of brickwork, but so much influenced by the action of fire as to have lost their original character. Even the texture and division between brick and brick has been so much obliterated as to be often indiscernible, and the whole has been converted into a solid mass of the hardest and, with the exception of a few air-bubbles here and there, the closest texture conceivable.—I know of no rock so tough and hard. Having no hammer, with a fragment of itself I tried to break off a bit, obviously a single brick, which projected a little from the rest, but with all my force I was unable; and was obliged to take specimens from what was lying about. The question instantly suggests itself.—What have these fire-scathed masses been? and by what means came they to be exposed to so overpowering a degree of heat as they must have undergone? I can conceive nothing less than the continued heat of some glass furnace, sufficient to produce the effect apparent here, and how could that have been applied at the height they must have occupied when in their proper place? There is nothing to lead to the idea, that much wood could have been employed in the construction of this fabric, and calculated, as it obviously was originally, to endure for ages, it is highly improbable that any large proportion of so perishable a material should have been used; yet the combustion of some such substance is the only means one can conceive by which such heat could have been here applied. The effect is evidently partial. The tall mass of brickwork that stands upright bears no mark of fire—how is this? We have no Scriptural authority for believing that the Temple of Belus was destroyed by any miraculous manifestation of Divine power; but the Arabs have a tradition that the Birs was destroyed by fire from Heaven. Thus we have but a choice between the belief of some most extraordinary and inexplicable natural agency, and that of a miracle, to account for the appearances now manifest on this wonderful ruin. The effects of lightning are sometimes tremendous—we hear of its fusing large bolts of metal by a single flash; but terrible, indeed, and nothing short of miraculous must have been those flashes (if lightning it was), that shivered, fused, and overthrew the blackened fragments that strew the summit of this mighty mass of ruins."

Another day was passed in examining the various antiques found among the ruins, and brought for sale by the Jews, who purchase them of the Arabs:—

"Nothing proves more unanswerably the antiquity of these ruins, or presents a more interesting view of the succession of nations by whom they have been tenanted, than the distinct varieties of antiques and relics found amongst them. Cylinders and seals, marked with the cuneiform, or arrow-headed characters, common to the bricks of Babylon, the ruins of Persepolis, and those of Koordistan and Armenia; the more choice, and sometimes most exquisitely executed, cameos and intaglios of the Greek artists, together with coins and ornaments of the same era; others, the subjects of which indicate them as productions of the Roman chisel, and the well-known costume and characters of the dynasty of the Sassanides—all are found in abundance, good, bad, and indifferent

(though, certainly, the two last qualities predominated), and were offered for our acceptance in exchange for our coin."

We have not yet parted company from Mr. Fraser, but must halt for the present.

OUR LIBRARY TABLE

The Poetical Works of the Rev. H. H. Milman, 3 vols. —Without hazarding a conjecture or wasting a thought on the verdict of posterity, it is sufficient for us to know that during the last twenty years Mr. Milman has not only acquired but preserved a sufficient degree of popularity to ensure a welcome to this collected edition of his poems. In it the order of publication has been judiciously varied, for the purpose of bringing the religious dramas into one volume. On running once again, though hastily, over these dramas, we were struck by their strong family likeness. There is no lack of beauty either in their conception or language; but we should object to the three Graces if they were identical either in feature or attitude. 'The Fall of Jerusalem,' too, is a subject which requires such a combination of all that is sublime and pathetic in the resources of poetry, as to defy the powers of uninspired imagination. It is no disparagement therefore of Mr. Milman to say that the task, however gracefully attempted, has not been fully accomplished. In truth, his province is rather that of the tender and impassioned than either the stern or the awful. 'Belshazzar' is another subject which appears almost beyond the grasp of poetry: but by those with whom soft cadences and musical tones will excuse the absence of the more thrilling effects of the lyre, Mr. Milman's poem will be read with pleasure. 'The Martyr of Antioch' is more within his reach. 'Samor' is an epic, which, whatever be its intrinsic merits, has never taken root in public estimation. The third volume contains 'Anne Boleyn,' 'Fazio,' the best known and perhaps the most popular of the author's works, and 'Nala and Damayanti,' translated from the Sanscrit, the last published of his poetical works, and reviewed *Athen.* No. 414.

Glimpses of the Old World, or Incursions on the Continent and in Great Britain, by the Rev. J. A. Clark, 2 vols.—*Letters from the Old World*, by a Lady of New York, 2 vols.—Whether, like Messrs. Willis, Fay, and Thatcher, they move about pencilling European society and distinguished persons—or, like Mr. Stephens, they interweave the interest of their personal adventures with the distant but not dim associations which hallow every inch of the Eastern land—or, like Mr. Irving, they bring to the old country ripe scholarship ready to appreciate, and poetical enthusiasm, waiting but to be kindled—the Americans are among our pleasantest travellers. The volumes here conjoined would enable us to prove our assertion; but the Continent and Great Britain have been so betrayed, that our readers would hardly be obliged to us for extracts from Mr. Clark. It is enough to state, that the recovery of his health was the object of his tour; and that, being a Protestant ecclesiastic, though not engaged in any special mission, he observed the ruins of Rome, the manners of France, and the Exeter Hall manifestations of England, as it were, from beneath the shadow of a shovel hat, which cast a gloom of suspicion and disapproval upon all things Papistical. But Mr. Clark's sectarianism is neither bitter nor fierce; and his book contains matter of speculation for the general reader, as well as for his own flock.—The 'Lady of New York' is a trifle more cosmopolitan in the tone of her correspondence, though every now and then a few words of the jargon of sect unpleasantly break the thread of her good-humoured and superficial gossip concerning the Nile and the Pyramids, the Holy City, and the tombs of Thebes. Her flippancy rises to an objectionable point when she writes of Lady Hester Stanhope, whom she reviles in good round terms, for secluding herself, her visions and her enthusiasms, from the stare of common travellers.—New York ladies among the number, who would have stormed her castle, note-book in hand! Elsewhere, if the "pink spencer" be not in the best possible harmony with the scene, it is not impertinent. To lay aside metaphor, the volumes are readable and tolerably amusing.

Camp and Quarters, by Major J. Patterson, 2 vols. —The smallest of military small-talk. Major Pat.

tersoon would seem here to have published the sweepings of the portfolios of the Gleigs and Napiers and Maxwells; and his book is *crambe repetita*, without the redemption of piquancy of style or interest of anecdote.

Rough Poetical Sketches of some Political Characters.—The writer is of opinion that, from the nature of his undertaking, he has exposed himself to some personal risk, which, however, he is prepared to meet with the resignation of a martyr. As it is possible that he may have persuaded the females of his family into a like notion, we think it humane to assure them that Political Characters are not so thin-skinned as he imagines:—further, that we doubt whether these "paper-pellets" will ever reach their mark, or the pop-gun be heard beyond the precincts of the publishers.

A Summary of the History of England, by Felix Boden; translated by J. Duncan.—M. Boden has given a very accurate view of the constitutional history of England, the gradual growth and expansion of its representative government, and has grouped together with considerable skill the series of events which led to the successive changes in the form and influence of parliament. His comparison between the revolutions of England and France is a pleasing specimen of philosophical analysis, and displays remarkable acuteness in detecting the causes both of their identity and their diversity.

The Edinburgh Academic Annual.—We have more than once recorded our disapprobation of the publication of school and college essays; the immaturity of thought and grandiloquence of style, natural to young writers, are not likely to be soon corrected when the world is asked to admire specimens of precocious talent. The contributors to the *Edinburgh Annual* are, however, more than youths,—some of them are practised writers, long and favourably known to the public, especially the Ornithologist, Macgillivray. Still there is a stiffness, such as usually characterizes academic prelections and prize essays, in most of the papers—a mannerism which, however valued in a university, is not likely to please general readers.

M'Intosh's Practical Gardener,—of which a number or two have been for some time before us, merits notice, as offering one of the best guides to practical gardening in all its branches. Its author was formerly gardener to King Leopold at Claremont, and no one is more capable of teaching the art of horticulture so far as books can teach it.

The Bouquet, or Ladies' Flower Garden,—is a useful guide to the management of plants in sitting rooms; it would however have been still more so, if the causes of death in plants so circumstanced had been in the first instance clearly pointed out.

List of New Books.—Post Office Directory, with New Supplement, 8vo. 10s. 6d. cl.—Jones's Biographical Dictionary, 8th edit. 18mo. 6s. 6d.—Osborne's London and Birmingham Railway, with Thirty Engravings, 18mo. 5s. cl.—Literature of Ancient Greece, Vol. I. "Poetry," Library of Useful Knowledge, 8vo. 7s. 6d. cl.—Mill's British India, by H. H. Wilson, Vol. II. 8vo. 14s. cl.—Clarendon's Rebellion, Fifty-six Portraits, 2 vols. imp. 8vo. 2l. 10s. cl.—The Dramatic Works of Massinger and Ford, royal 8vo. 20s. cl.—Chronological Tables of Modern History, folio, 12s. sewed.—Memoirs of a Prisoner of State, 2 vols. crown 8vo. 21s. cl.—The African Slave Trade and its Remedy, by T. F. Buxton, 8vo. 5s. cl.—Polack's Manners and Customs of the New Zealanders, 2 vols. post 8vo. 16s. cl.—McCrie's Life of Knox, cheap edition, 8vo. 7s. 6d. cl.—McNelle's Lectures on the Prophecies relative to the Jews, 3rd edit. 12mo. 4s. 6d. cl.—The Truth of Revelation Demonstrated, by John Murray, 2nd edit. 8vo. 15s. cl.—Church of the Fathers, by the Rev. J. H. Newman, 6s. 7s. 6d. cl.—The Pulpit, Vol. XXXVI. 8vo. 7s. 6d. cl.—Sermons, by the Rev. S. Hopkins, 6s. 4s. cl.—Epitaphs, Original and Selected, royal 12mo. 5s. cl.—The Angelicon, Sonnets on Divine Attributes, by the Rev. D. H. Rider, 16mo. 3s. 6d. cl.—Sordello, a Poem, by R. Browning, 6s. 6d. bds.—Chitty's Forms, 5th edit. crown 8vo. 21s. bds.—Archbold's Common Law Practice, by T. Chitty, 7th edit. 2 vols. crown 8vo. 2l. 2s. bds.—Paul on Piles, &c. 2nd edit. 8vo. 5s. cl.—New Introduction to the Mathematics, 8vo. 9s. bds.—Hall's Elements of Algebra, royal 12mo. 6s. 6d. cl.—Cooley's Geometrical Propositions Demonstrated, with Diagrams, cr. 8vo. 3s. 6d. cl.—Geography for Children, new edit. 12mo. 2s. 6d. cl.—The Religious Wars of France, by J. Duncan, 6s. 6d. cl.—Walton's Lives of Donne, Hooker, &c. new edit. 12mo. 10s. 6d. cl.—Ridout's Letters to a Governess, Part II. 12mo. 2s. 6d. cl.—Sherwood's Account of the House of Lords, 32mo. 3s. cl.—Mogg's Picture of London, with Map, 18mo. 2s. 6d. swd., 3s. 6d. cl.—Tales of Truth, by M. Elliott, royal 18mo. 3s. 6d. cl.—Autumn and Winter, by B. H. Draper, square, 3s. 6d. cl.—Tales in Prose, by M. Howitt, 6s. 3s. 6d. cl.—Peter Parley's Tales about Great Men, square 16mo. 3s. 6d. cl.

ON THE ORIGIN OF THE BABYLONIAN ARROW-HEADED CHARACTER, AND ITS CONNEXION WITH OUR MODERN ALPHABET.

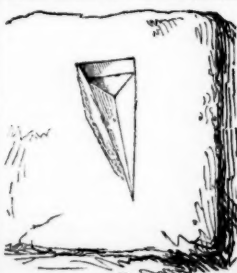
[The following is the substance of a lecture delivered at the Royal Institution by Mr. J. Nasmyth; but we thought it advisable to defer our report until we could get some diagrams engraved, the better to illustrate the argument.]

There are few subjects, Mr. Nasmyth observed, which tend to interest the mind more deeply than inquiries into the primitive origin of those forms, which the active hand of man has conferred on the materials of which he has availed himself with a view to supply his wants; and in all such researches, the interest may be said to increase in proportion to the antiquity of the subject. This is especially the case in the present instance; for not only does the subject relate to a very remote era in the history of the human race, but is also connected with a people celebrated in history as the parents of science and civilization, and that vast city, the extent of whose mouldering remains will even for ages yet to come excite astonishment and admiration.

The halo of deep interest which envelopes all that relates to Babylon, has led to the removal to our museums of such apparently humble objects as the bricks of which that wonderful city was built. The vast antiquity of these objects would alone have been sufficient to excite interest, but in addition, this interest is heightened, in the greatest degree, by their being stamped with certain peculiar and striking characters, which, from their singular form, being somewhat like the shape of the head of an arrow, have, for want of any better name, been termed "the arrow-headed character." The annexed figure will serve to give a general idea of these objects. The character is for the most part stamped on the edge of the bricks, that being the part which, when the brick was built into the wall, would enable whatever was written on it to be seen.

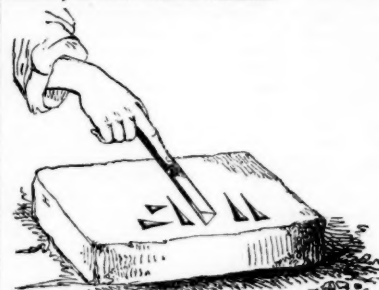


The Babylonians having settled on the banks of a river (the Euphrates), which supplied, in the most abundant manner, a very convenient building material in the form of mud, they availed themselves of it; and for that reason the city of Babylon was built of bricks, the greater part of which were simply hardened by drying in the sun. Being thus naturally a brick-making people, we shall find that to that circumstance alone may we trace and ascribe the origin of this peculiar form of character, which may, even in its most complex combination, be resolved into its primitive elementary arrow-head form. A careful inspection of this character led Mr. Nasmyth to consider by what means it was produced or written; and as it is so intimately connected with the material, he very soon perceived that it was the result of the impression of the angle of a triangular instrument or style, which, when pressed into the surface of the moist clay, produced, in the most simple and convenient manner, the character in question. This conjecture was confirmed, when, by discovering on one of the Babylonian bricks now in the British Museum, a line of very bold characters, one of which had been so deeply impressed by the style or stick with which it had been stamped, as to leave the exact form and size of the instrument, of which the accompanying is a representation.

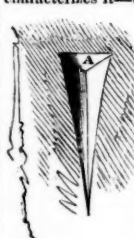


The manner in which those characters were written, Mr. Nasmyth conceives to have been as shown in fig. 3, where the style or stick is seen held in the hand in an angular or inclined position, with respect to the surface of

the clay. This inclined position was not only requisite to clear the hand from the surface of the clay, but also to produce, in the most convenient manner, the arrow-headed character.



It is evident, that by the mere contact of such an instrument with the clay, the arrow-headed character would be the result. Indeed, it is impossible to touch the surface of a piece of moist clay with such an instrument, without instantly producing the character in question, with all its peculiarities; and as this character was at once easy of production, strikingly peculiar in form, and capable of an infinite variety of combination, it was therefore adopted and employed in the most beautiful and elaborate inscriptions on the bricks and pottery of that wonderful people; most of which objects are covered with such characters, and all produced by the same simple means. This character being once adopted, was subsequently employed, not only when the material on which the inscription was to be written was clay (to the use of which it owed its origin), but when of stone, marble, or even agate, and in all cases it retained, with a singular degree of faithfulness, those characteristics which were inherent in its clay origin,—namely, the triangular form, and especially that most marked feature which characterizes it—the depressed angle at the point A,

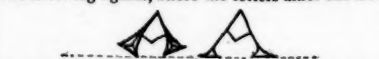


the necessary result of the original employment of the three-cornered style and moist clay, or tablet of wax.

Mr. Nasmyth being desirous of ascertaining whether the account of Cadmus having taught the early Greeks their alphabet, was in any way borne out by the appearance of the early characters of that celebrated people, proceeded to inspect some of the primitive Greek inscriptions in the British Museum, conceiving that, as Cadmus was a Phœnician, and therefore intimately connected with the Babylonians and Chaldeans, there might be found, in the early Greek inscriptions, some traces of the Babylonian arrow head. This conjecture was most fully borne out by evidence; for in most of such inscriptions (of the straight-line characters,) we can perceive the existence of the arrow head, as shown in the following figures.



It will be seen, that any one of these capital letters can be decomposed or resolved into primitive elementary arrow heads:—and in the early Greek inscriptions there is the most scrupulous attention given to the due characteristic form of the arrow head, not only in regard to its general outline, but also in respect to the depressed angle, as above alluded to; and that these letters are the result of combinations of the Babylonian arrow head, is strikingly illustrated by the non-parallelism of the bottom stroke with the line of the inscription—a peculiarity consequent on the adoption of the Babylonian arrow-head character, as the basis of the Greek alphabet. What Mr. N. alluded to, in regard to the non-parallelism of the bottom stroke, may be more clearly understood by the following figures, where the letters differ one from



the other only in the point in question—the bottom

stroke of the one being inclined, while the other is parallel to the line of the inscription. In this same manner all the straight-lined letters of the Greek alphabet may be resolved into their primitive elements, to which the above principle will be found to apply. It was only in the Latin inscriptions in which he began to find a departure from the characteristic forms due to the Babylonian origin, which were not only adhered to more or less throughout the Greek era, but also throughout that of the Roman, in whose sculptured characters or inscriptions he found the most careful attention given to the formation of the depressed angle or characteristic of the arrow head, as may be seen either in any Roman inscription, or even in the capital letters of our own time, where we still trace vestiges of the arrow head in the top and bottom stroke of our alphabetic capital letters, as may be seen by reference to the drawing before given of A Y T K, or in N X; all of which have the distinct remains of their Babylonian origin in the top and bottom stroke, which is nothing more or less than a corruption of the original or primitive arrow-headed impression of the style in the moist clay, begun some 4,000 years ago. The letter T is a very striking example of the gradual departure from the primitive form, which, in the early Greek inscriptions, has its arrow-headed character strongly marked; then in the Roman, and so on, as shown in the subjoined letters, where the arrow-headed top gradually passes away into our modern T.



There are few examples which so strikingly exemplify the principles of the *etymology of form*—namely, that tendency which mankind has ever had to cling to forms due to the material, the use of which led to their adoption; for here have we to this day peculiarities in the forms of our capital letters, which sprang from the employment of mud or clay as a building material, upwards of 4,000 years ago.

FOREIGN CORRESPONDENCE.

—University, Germany, Feb. 10.

I had always a particular predilection for sacred music, and it has grown almost into a passion from my late acquaintance with a professor here, who is the possessor of the greatest private collection of MS. church music that perhaps exists in Europe. He has paid very large sums for the acquisition of some of his treasures, and has correspondents in Spain and Italy who are still adding to them. This octogenarian, who retains an extraordinary vigour of mind and body, holds weekly *Academias* (as they say in Italy), where no instrument is used but the organ, and no woman admitted. I have had the singular privilege, for a foreigner, of attending these meetings, and held many conversations with this fanatic on the state of the art in Germany at the present day. Whether it be prejudice or not, he has a perfect horror of all modern compositions, as applied to religious worship, and has no respect for any masters of his own country, with one or two exceptions, among which I might mention Sebastian Bach. He asserts that Mozart is indebted to his recollections of the Sistine chapel and the Misereres for all that is good in his Masses, not even excepting his renowned Requiem, and sets Handel infinitely above him. Great as he admits the author of the Creation to have been, he holds him to be infinitely inferior to Palestrina, or Lasso. I was curious to know to what cause he attributed, as universally admitted, the falling off of church music at the present day, and will endeavour to commit to paper some of his reasons.

"The first reform I would suggest," observed the Professor, "would be the banishment of every instrument from the church but the organ. Church music has need of none of those adjuncts so essential to the stage or the concert. In the two latter, where the singing has to awaken a variety of passions and emotions, the voice requires an element, if I may say so, demands instrumentation to develope, to support, to veil it. In the church, on the contrary, the orchestra is not necessary in order to draw out the voices—they draw each other out—excite—animate—support

themselves—and, in fact, instruments are there out of place; they hide the voices and destroy their effect. "Praise God on the harp and viol," might be a good injunction in the time of the inspired psalmist, but is not so in ours. All this blowing, scraping, and fingering, is to my mind heathenish, and unchristian; it affects the imagination, instead of touching the heart, and banishes those feelings of devotion with which every one should pray in spirit and in truth. I have another objection to the orchestra: as brilliancy of colouring often helps to conceal the defects of drawing in a picture, so the profusion of instrumental ornament fills up the blanks in the mind of the artist—helps out the sickliness of the thought. A good quartet is more difficult to compose than a symphony—but more difficult still is it to write a mass without orchestral accompaniments, than one with a choir of two-and-twenty voices, accompanied by all the crash and thunder of a Berlioz. Simplicity and purity, the absence of all adventitious frippery, is what church music requires. What is it that gives its charm to all works of ancient art, but the simplicity of nature?—what but this throws almost a divinity over the Madonnas of Raphael? It has been said of some great writer that he was better naked than clad—the remark, with a certain latitude, holds good with all the great composers—from Palestrina downwards.—Every bungler that can write an opera now thinks himself able to compose a mass; but if the church was purified of its abuse, it would then only occupy the thoughts of the first geniuses of the age—or, if there are none, create them. The Greek church is the best proof of the truth of this remark, for though it has not produced the richest treasures or chefs-d'œuvre, like the Latin church of old, by keeping itself free from instrumental contamination, it has reached a very high degree of eminence, the voice in the Russian-Greek church being all in all. The organ is the sole instrument fit for the worship of God—it combines in itself the perfections of all others—it serves to awaken devotion in all souls—and is the proper medium for lending the blended voices, or, if need be, of veiling them. With the swell of the organ all voices are mingled into one, without the shrill being heard, or the untutored grating on the ear."

Admitting the justice of many of these remarks, I could not acquiesce with the professor in his depreciation of Mozart or Hummel, nor attribute the decline of the art, at the present day, to other than the assigned causes. Among the principal of these I might consider the undevotional spirit of the age, and the consequent want of encouragement to write for the church, whilst the opera offers certain fame, however short-lived it may prove, and immediate remuneration. Still the sweeping condemnation of the moderns is not borne out. Mendelssohn Bartholdy's 'Paulus,' is an oratorio of great merit; I shall never forget the effect which that pathetic appeal, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem," produced on me.—Tomaschek, in his Requiem, deserves the highest praise: I do not mean in the first of his compositions, which is in some degree crude and imperfect, but in the last, which I heard performed at Prague, of which town he is chapel-master; and Soboleski is of great promise, the German world looking forward with great expectation for the appearance of his long promised 'Johannes der Tauffer' (John the Baptist).

But enough of music for to-day.—I can perceive that a revolution is beginning to take place in the German theatre, as it has done, or rather I might say begun, in our own. Schiller's 'Jean d'Arc' has been brought out, and his plays, like Shakspeare's, are no longer acted to empty benches. A more healthy feeling is perceptible in the public. The time was when only the 'Ronde des jamees' could electrify the audience—when Fanny Elssler was the ideal of guardsmen and the dream of attachés—when every dandy's pipe was ornamented with her portrait, and when she appeared on many a coffee-cup at Berlin. I was at Vienna, too, when such was the enthusiasm of the admirers of Taglioni, that she was met by crowds, and the horses were taken from her carriage. It is to be hoped that such days are past for ever. A tragically by a new writer (at least to me) has made a great sensation at Stuttgart—it is entitled 'The Last White Rose'—the subject is a sequel to the wars of York and Lancaster. Jean

Paul has remarked that a reader can, generally speaking, form but a very imperfect idea of a picture by the description of it, nor judge by a skeleton whether it belonged to a peasant girl or a Venus, I shall therefore spare you all attempts to analyze the plot, or enter into the characters of the false and real Richard—the principal personages in the piece. A correspondent of mine at Hamburg speaks highly of a comedy, played a few days ago, called 'The Talisman.' It is an adaptation to modern times of Beaumont and Fletcher's 'French Lawyer.' Anglomani is daily spreading more and more, and is not likely to decrease from Prince Albert's marriage, which was celebrated here last night by the students from Bonn, where the Prince studied, and, as my informant saith, never missed a lecture—this *en passant*. To change the subject from music and the drama, I would recommend to your notice a pictorial Album lately published at Dusseldorf. The school of Dusseldorf is likely to form a new era in the art—the students there live in brotherly union, and, free from that jealousy so common to artists, aid each other with their counsels, not this alone, but afford more substantial assistance, working often together on the same composition, and one putting the figures into another's landscape, as in times of old. Dusseldorf has already produced painters whose names are familiar to you, and engravings from the works of these artists ornament the Album. Nor is the Album of German artists confined to one school, Munich has also furnished its contribution, and not the least attractive of the parts, for they consist of four, has been furnished from the designs of Neurealter, Gail, and Habenschaden. Since I wrote to you I have been devouring a most delightful volume, the third and last of the 'Memoirs of Barthold George Niebuhr.' The work principally consists of his letters from 1823 to 1830, some of them relate to his private concerns, many to his great work on the Roman History, and a few treat of the events of his own times, and of the politics and prospects of Germany. The view he takes of the latter is a melancholy one, and, coming from so profound an observer as Niebuhr, is worthy of serious consideration by his countrymen. B.

OUR WEEKLY GOSSIP.

'Heads of Milton' spring up as fast as heads on Hydra—when one falls to the ground another succeeds, and all are so different that we might imagine the poet had seven as well as the monster. Our doubts stated a fortnight back concerning the soi-disant portrait in the National Collection have called forth a new claimant in the shape of a marble bust, which pretends to absolute legitimacy. The Young Pretender has this advantage over the Old, that it is very like, instead of very unlike Milton, as far as his features are known either from pictures or descriptions: it has also much of the character belonging to his ideal presence, the pure sanctitude and beautiful severity of expression we should look for in his countenance at an earlier age. Mr. Woodward, its possessor, informs us he purchased it twenty years since at Florence, where it was called a portrait of *Raffaël*. We find ourselves much more disposed to acknowledge its claims on the score of beauty than authenticity: and for these reasons. Its style of workmanship seems to us not at all that of the year 1638, when Milton was on his travels, and when a fantastic affectation characterized sculpture. Again, the bust is in Italian costume, which particular, though seemingly for it, makes really against it, as portraits in fancy dresses are we apprehend rather a modern fashion, and Milton would have been delineated, beyond almost all doubt, in the actual doublet or cloak band, &c. of his climate, not in an open plated tunic half way up his breast, and a light, hot-country jacket: it is we who consider old costumes so picturesque and becoming. Besides, Milton was but thirty when he travelled, while the flesh of this bust is somewhat flaccid,—which to us betrays a work made up from imitations of old portraits, though it has a certain juvenility better to suit the age above said. Our hypothesis explains the costume, which was close at hand to the Italian imitator, who found English costume of 1638 beyond his reach. From our great interest about all that regards the Poet, we have entered into this long discussion upon his bust, and do

not wantonly endeavour to destroy the proprietor's illusion respecting it. Warton's note, on which he so much relies, that Hollis searched "for an original bust in marble of Milton, supposed to be somewhere in that city [Florence],"—has no weight with us. Who does not see that the very search would soon bring a forgery into the market?

We have also visited an exhibition of Ancient Pictures at 209, Regent Street, which comprise some worth seeing and even a few worth buying. One or two Landscapes said by *Rosa da Tivoli* are pretty, and in that bluish-green-gray tint so very Spanish. A *Guercinesque* 'Cleopatra' (as we remember) is in the transparent pale-brown tone also peculiar to Spanish colouring. 'Semiramis' by *Caravaggio* has merit. Of two *Ecce Homo's* given to *Titian*, the small one (a sketch) is quite worthy of him, the larger, finished picture, not. A 'St. John' by *Spagnoletto* we thought pleasing, and a 'St. Christopher' (evidently but part of a very large work) may be genuine. But the most remarkable specimen here in our opinion was a small copy of the colossal 'St. Francis Xavier' which we saw at the Belvedere Collection, Vienna. It is on copper, very finished and full of beauty: it has to our eyes, though called original, tameness enough for a copy, yet spirit enough for a copy by a first-rate master. Were the touch a little more *staccato*, we could even attribute it to Teniers, who had a strong turn towards such imitations. As the large original can no more be expected to migrate into England than the Belvedere itself, we consider this little facsimile valuable, and should deem it an acquisition to any collection public or private. Let us however warn visitors that the jewels above mentioned are set off by no small quantity of foil: the pictures ascribed to *Coello*, *Zurbaran*, *Alonso Cano*, and other unusual artists of Spain, if not such rubbish as we see every day, are still rubbish.

The Report of the Sacred Harmonic Society for the year 1839, is a valuable document for those who desire to see music less of an exotic in England. We find, by it, that the list of members and subscribers has steadily and progressively enlarged; that the audiences present at the increased number of performances (each concert having been recently repeated) have continued to be crowded and enthusiastic. The Society, having now purchased a fine Organ, has a plan *in petto*, for a more advantageous distribution of the orchestra, which is to be rebuilt. It is accumulating a library, from the stores of which the next new extracts for public use will be Handel's 'Saul,' and may be Crotch's 'Palestine.' It has a balance at its banker's. But, better even than these substantial proofs of affluence, laid before the public by the Committee, is the temper of their Report—their "caution against the supposition that perfection has been attained in the Society's performances"—the disposition evinced by them to meet those critics who conceive increased strictness of criticism necessary in proportion to the aspiration and proficiency of the object under notice, with a frank and candid admission of the justice and friendliness of such a course. This determination to improve, and this resolution not to hold themselves above counsel, are golden rules, which the elder and more aristocratic musical establishments of London would have done well to enrol upon their statute-books. As it is, we hold ourselves in readiness to hear of the establishment of some popular instrumental concerts, which shall be to the Philharmonic, what the Sacred Harmonic Society has been to the Ancient Concerts—more cheap, more enterprising, and more successful.

We regret to learn from Rome that the fire in the library of the Roman College has been far more destructive than was, at first, apprehended. Upwards of 370 manuscripts have been destroyed, including twenty-seven Arabic, forty-three Persian, nine Armenian, besides a collection of the Hindû and Chinese dramas—all of which are unpublished, and supposed to have had no duplicates in Europe. The number of printed books consumed has not yet been ascertained; but 1,500 volumes, belonging to the earliest days of printing are unhappily included in this portion of the loss,—as well as the valuable collection of Greek and Latin classics, bequeathed to the Roman College by the celebrated French philologist Muret [Muretus], enriched by the autograph marginal notes of that illustrious scholar.

Letters from Munich inform us, that they are engaged at the royal foundry in preparing the earthen mould for casting in bronze the great emblematic statue of Bavaria, executed by the celebrated sculptor Higelmeier. This statue is the largest that has been cast in modern times, and is fifty-two feet in height. A plaster cast has been made from the original model by Schwartz, sixteen feet in height, and placed provisionally in the vestibule of the royal residence at Munich. While speaking of art, we may mention, that upwards of 3,500 works were offered to the exhibition at the Salon in Paris, which is just opened. The catalogue, we are informed, is likely to exhibit a list of not less than 2,200 or 2,300. Letters from the East announce the arrival of M. Horace Vernet at Smyrna, in the early part of last month.

The French Academy has appointed a committee, composed of MM. Thiers, Mignet, Lacretelle, and Népomucène Lemercier, to examine and decide upon the historic works, candidates for the great prize founded by the Baron Gobert, which is to be adjudged in the course of the coming May. The prize is an annuity of 10,000 francs (400*l.*), nine-tenths of which is to be given to the most eloquent article on the history of France, and the remainder to that which shall be pronounced as standing in the second place of excellence.

Among the recent theatrical doings of our French neighbours, we may mention the production at the Théâtre Français of a new comedy, in five acts, by M. Scribe, entitled, 'La Calomnie';—and, among their recent publications, that of the fourth volume of the 'History of France,' by M. Michelet, containing the reign of Charles VI., and the narrative of the establishment of English domination in France. New novels, also, by Paul de Kock and the fashionable novelist of the day, Charles de Bernard, have likewise been added to the stock of light reading, which is a necessity to the French public:—and, as a justification of our notice of these things, if they need any, we may mention as among the signs of reciprocity and interchange of mind between that nation and ourselves, that, in consequence of the daily increasing numbers of students who follow the English course in the University of Paris, a decree has recently issued from the Royal Council of Public Instruction, approved by M. Villemain, appointing two professors of that language, instead of one.

As one of the most striking and significant signs of the times in which our destiny is cast, we cannot avoid referring to a recently published appeal addressed to the Protestant monarchs of Europe, on the subject of the Restoration of the Jews to their own country of the Promise. This singular document recites the original covenant made with Abraham, and referring to the opening suggested by the present posture of Oriental affairs, pleads the cause of the wanderers before the princes of Europe, in every one of whose dominions they were so lately a proscribed and denounced race, that it seems as if the world could scarcely have got so much older and wiser in the short interval. In the face of general demonstrations so full of meaning, all partial attempts to re-establish the reign of bigotry lose their terrors. If there be something striking in this appeal from the Jew to the Gentile on the strength of other arguments than his gold, there is, if possible, something still more strange to our antiquated notions of the Jewish character itself, in a fact which we find stated elsewhere. It appears, that the Hebrews of the town of Rosenberg, the capital of the district of Oppelen, in Prussian Silesia, understanding that the erection of the new Lutheran church in that place was impeded for want of funds, subscribed the required amount for its completion, and accompanied the gift by a letter, expressing their earnest desire for the spread of the feeling of universal brotherhood, undisturbed by differences of religion. Verily, the Jew is another character lost to the page of European romance! The foregoing facts are pleasantly significant of "progress." Another more whimsical indication of a disposition to re-consider the decrees of our forefathers, may here be recorded. A literary gentleman of Athens, named M. Sophianopoulos, a passionate lover of "progress," to whose service he has dedicated a periodical, among other methods of enforcing its cause, has hit on the very original one of appealing to the tribunals of his

country for a reversal of the decision pronounced 500 years before Christ, *In re Socrate!* To this effect, he has actually addressed the King and the Court of the Areopagus, urging the iniquity of the sentence, the sympathy which all nations will feel in his (the memorialist's) motion for a new trial, the example of Louis Philippe in the case of Ney,—and concluding by a demand that the judgment shall be formally set aside, (the heirs of Socrates, of course, paying the costs). The Court of the Areopagus seems to be as impenetrable as it was 2,300 years ago. As soon as the President found out the drift of the zealous advocate, he very abruptly interrupted M. Sophianopoulos, who has taken nothing by his motion. The sentence condemning the philosopher to death, is, therefore, virtually confirmed:—our readers are, probably, aware that it has been executed.

BRITISH INSTITUTION, PAUL MALL.

The GALLERY, for the EXHIBITION and SALE of the WORKS of BRITISH ARTISTS, is OPEN DAILY, from 10 in the Morning until 5 in the Evening.—Admission, 1*s.* Catalogue, 1*s.* WILLIAM BARNARD, Keeper.

POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTION, 3*rd* REGENT-STREET.—Interesting NOVELTY by the HYDRO-OXYGEN MICROSCOPE exhibiting Pictures magnified 2000 times. An additional room is opened, in which are some most elaborate Models and an extraordinary and costly Work of Art; various other Novelties, in addition to the usual Exhibition of the Electroscope, Daguerotype (specimens by Daguerre himself), Meteoric Chromes, Chemical or Philosophical Lectures, Electrical Experiments (including Blowing up Sunken Vessels), Telegraph, Diving Bell, Diver, &c.—Open from Half-past Ten o'clock till Dark. Admission, each 1*s.*

SPLENDID EXHIBITION.—ROYAL GALLERY, ADELPHI-STREET, LOWTHER ARCADE, WEST STRAND.—Electro-Magnetic Locomotive Engine at work—Electrical Bell, the only living specimen in Europe—Beautiful Models of Chinese War and Trading Junks—Polarization of Light, by Mr. Goodard's Polaroscope—Oxy-hydrogen Microscope—Steam-Gun—Messrs. Whitworth's Patent Foot-Lathe—Mr. Corliss's Jacks for lifting Locomotive Engines—Steam Engines, &c.—Lecture daily on different branches of Physical Philosophy.—Open daily at 10, A.M. Admission, 1*s.*

THE THAMES TUNNEL

is OPEN to the Public every day, (except Sunday), from Nine in the Morning until Dark.—Admission 1*s.* each. Entrance is on the Surrey side of the River, and near the Church at Rotherhithe. The Tunnel is now upwards of 1,100 feet in length, brilliantly lighted with gas, and is completed to WITHIN 60 FEET FROM THE WHARF WALL at WAPPING.

Company's Office, By order,
Walbrook Buildings, Walbrook, J. CHARLIER,
March 1840. Clerk to the Company.

SCIENTIFIC AND LITERARY

ASIATIC SOCIETY.

Feb. 15.—Sir G. T. Staunton, Bt. M.P. in the chair. J. Mawdsley, Esq. was elected a resident member. The reading of Sir J. Macdonald's review of Col. Evans's work, 'On the practicability of an invasion of British India,' was concluded. Although this paper was written ten years ago, the intimate acquaintance of the writer with the countries to which the tract in question related, and the recent occurrence of important events in those countries, could not fail to give an interest to the descriptions and observations of the reviewer. The work of Col. Evans contemplated the possibility of Russia subjugating the whole of Turkestan, taking the route of Khiva, Bokhara, and Balkh, and of establishing a provisional government there in one campaign; and then it assumed that with that possession, as the basis of further operations, another campaign would suffice to carry her arms over the Hindoo Cosh to Cabool, and thence by Peshawar to the Indus. Sir J. Macdonald goes over the whole of Col. Evans's positions, and shows that his conclusions have been deduced from his having taken too high an estimate of the power of Russia, and from his having, at the same time, mistaken the general character and the natural difficulties of the route, as well as the probable resistance of the inhabitants of the countries to be traversed. We can afford room for nothing more than a summary of Sir J. Macdonald's reasons for coming to a different conclusion from Col. Evans. He remarks on the difficulty of providing an army in its march through a country which, though containing many fertile spots, is yet, in the greatest part of its surface, a region of dreary and cheerless wastes, marked by a total absence of herbage, fuel, and wholesome water, with its plains bare and unpeopled; its mountains covered with snow for half the year, and its fertile valleys, at one moment the seat of plenty and enjoyment, at another given up to blood and devastation. He does not admit the practicability of converting into good and efficient soldiers within a few months, the 30,000 Russian and Persian slaves now in captivity in Khiva and Bokhara, where

hard usage, toil, and insufficient food must have reduced their moral and physical strength much below Col. Evans's estimate of their powers, and of whom the Persians, who constitute at least half the number, would, if set at liberty, be more likely to return to their own homes than to aid new masters in further schemes of conquest. He states that Col. Evans is deceived in his opinion of the ease by which the Oxus may be ascended, and remarks that Nadir Shah, with his light and unencumbered troops, unaccompanied by the baggage, ammunition, and artillery necessary to an European army, had great difficulty in his progress on that river; and that his course, too, was with the current, while the Russian vessels would have to be dragged by horses and men against the stream; that the estimate made by Col. Evans of the load which a camel can carry, is nearly double the reality, the load of a camel in Persia not being above 400lb., while Col. Evans supposes that three camels can carry above a ton; that in estimating the number of camels in the neighbourhood of Khiva at 100,000, because that number annually pay a tax at the gate on entry, he has quite forgotten that each camel may pass the gate several times in a year. He observes, also, that one argument employed by Col. Evans to prove the abundance of camels is, that every soldier on a march is accompanied by one to carry provisions; while the plain inference from that fact, namely, that provisions are very scarce, has not been drawn by Col. Evans. Sir John then gave a geographical account of the countries intervening between the Caspian and the Indus, by every road which can be followed. He described the habits of the native tribes, their independent mode of life, the ease with which they leave their homes and withdraw to the desert, the feuds always existing between different tribes; and notices their cunning policy in availing themselves of the rival powers in their neighbourhood, which they play off against each other to their own advantage. These, and many other difficulties, in the opinion of Sir J. Macdonald, would concur to render that a very difficult task which appears to Col. Evans so easy. The examples of the rapid advances of Alexander, Mahmood, Timur, and Nadir Shah, so often adduced, are in many points shown to be quite inapplicable to the case under consideration. A strong contrast was drawn between the character and habits of those conquerors and their hosts, and the physical and national habits of the Russians, as well as between the impressions produced by the respective armies on the nations through which they had to pass; and lastly, he observed that, supposing the hostile advance effected to the borders of the British territories, the country arrived at would be found in the hands of one of the most powerful nations of Europe, fully able to cope with any army that could be brought against it. A sketch of the sort of military operations to be put in practice on and near the Indus, admitting for a moment the practicability of an enemy proceeding so far, was then given; and the paper concluded with a eulogy of our native troops, which are considered to be, both morally and physically, equal to any exertion that might fairly be demanded of them.

The reading of this paper was followed by another, containing observations on Col. Evans's tract, and on the foregoing paper, by Sir J. Malcolm, who added the weight of his opinion in support of the views taken by Sir J. Macdonald.

Mr. E. Solly read papers on several articles of Indian produce. In consequence of the receipt of letters from India requesting information respecting the fibrous matter contained in the leaf of the pine-apple or ananas, with regard to its probable growth in this country, and its adaptation as a substitute for flax, he had made inquiries amongst manufacturers and other practical men relative to the subject. It has been long known that a strong fibrous material may be obtained from the leaf of the pine-apple, and indeed cloth has been manufactured from it in India for many years. The question now asked was, therefore, is it worth while to import this substance into England? The general opinion seemed to be, that its properties were such as to interfere much with its use; because the fibre, though very beautiful, was found very difficult to spin, and would not stand or bear washing well. He stated that a patent had however been obtained by Mr. Zincke for the manufacture of thread from the fibre of the pine-

apple leaf, and that the patentee had found, that when bleached the fibre could be spun far more readily than before that operation. Mr. S. considered that the greatest drawback to its importation and use in this country would be the expense; and he feared that the price at which it could be brought here would be so high as totally to preclude its entering into competition with flax and other fibrous substances.

Mr. Solly also gave an account of a new Indian gum resin, which he thought might be used with considerable advantage in some of the arts, and especially in the manufacture of varnishes. When applied to the surface of wood it formed a brilliant transparent covering which was very little liable to chill. He stated that it did not become brittle on drying, and he therefore proposed to employ the resin in combination with shell lac, and some other varnishes, which in drying become brittle; and which, consequently, when their surface is struck or abraded, are apt to split off from the ground to which they have been applied.

Mr. Solly then read the first part of a series of reports on an extensive variety of samples of the productions of the Punjab and Mysore, which, having been sent by the Chamber of Commerce at Bombay to the London East India and China Association, were forwarded by that body to him for examination and analysis; he described the mineral substances comprised in the series, which, however, contained little of novelty. He stated that the collection of dyes was highly interesting, and that he was engaged in their examination.

GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY.

March 9.—G. B. Greenough, Esq. F.R.S. Pres. in the chair.

The President read a copy of the congratulatory address which he had presented to Her Majesty on the part of the Society at the last levee.

The following communications were read:—

1. From Governor Gawler, dated Adelaide, September 1, with a chart of the outlets of the Lake Alexandrina into Encounter Bay, on the south coast of Australia; whence it appears that small craft, drawing about three feet water, may ply from the elbow of the Murray across the lake, and up to the great south bend. Mr. Eyre had left Port Lincoln, by land, for Streaky Bay, 150 miles to the north-west, where the Governor had directed a small vessel to meet him—this part of the coast being hitherto unexamined.

2. Notes on a Journey across Mexico, from Vera Cruz to Mazatlan, on the Pacific; to the Sandwich Islands; to China, and round the Globe in 1838-9, by Mr. Isidor Löwenstern, of Vienna.—After a residence of some time in the city of Mexico, during which Mr. Löwenstern visited the pyramids of Cholula, Xochicalco, &c., the mines of Real del Monte, and the neighbouring obsidian mines, where are the remarkable rocks known by the name of "Peñas cargadas" he quitted the capital on the 24th of July, 1838, and travelled by the usual route through Querétaro, Guadalajara, and Tepic, to Mazatlan. At Remedios, about seven miles to the westward of Mexico, Mr. Löwenstern discovered a mound resembling a pyramid, divided into stories, which apparently had been faced with stone; on its summit were the ruins of a castle. Querétaro, 100 miles north-west of Mexico, and 6,070 feet above the sea, is a picturesque town of 20,000 inhabitants, surrounded by gardens, in which the lofty cypress and gigantic organ-cactus are conspicuous: here is a large aqueduct and a plentiful supply of water. Celaya, a town of 10,000 inhabitants, twenty miles farther west, is in the midst of the most fertile and most populous district in Mexico. Its high cultivation is chiefly owing to the enlightened views of the statesman Don Lucas Alaman. At Guanajuato, 6,870 feet above the sea, General Cortazar has recently established an admirable mining institution. Near Tepetitlan, eighty miles farther west, Mr. Löwenstern discovered another pyramid, resembling in construction that of Xochicalco, of three stories, with a circular mound on its summit; it is composed of earth, and has, apparently, been ceased with stone; this monument is of the greater interest, as being situated in a part of the country in which no such remains had hitherto been found, and probably on

the line of migration of the Aztecs from California to Mexico. Guadalajara, forty miles farther west, has a population of 70,000, and, after the capital, is the largest and most thriving town in Mexico—and can boast of a respectable Italian Opera. From this place the country becomes wild and barren as you approach the Plan de Barrancas, near which the highest summit of the mountain is passed, at an elevation probably of 7,500 feet, and from this point the country rapidly descends towards the Tierras Calientes. Tepic, a town of 10,000 inhabitants, is still 2,900 feet above the Pacific at San Blas, from which it is distant about thirty miles; the road hence assumes a more northerly direction, and thirty miles beyond, crosses the great river of this part of the country, the Rio Grande or Toluclotlan, which has its sources near the Nevado de Toluca, about twenty miles south-west of the capital, and after a course of upwards of 450 miles, in a general west-north-west direction, falls into the Pacific at the port of San Blas; from hence, by a road which leads along at a distance of twenty miles from the coast, and passing the towns of Acaponeta and Escuinapa, the traveller reaches the port of Mazatlan, which is the most tolerable roadstead on this part of the coast—although on the 12th of November, 1838, it was visited by a hurricane, or cordonazo, as it is here called, in which nine vessels and numerous lives were lost. After a residence of eleven months in Mexico, Mr. Löwenstern embarked for the Sandwich Islands, where he remained two months, during which time he ascended the volcano of Mowna Roa, 13,200 feet, in Hawaii. He confirms Mr. Douglas's account of this remarkable mountain in every point except the circumference of the crater, which Mr. Löwenstern estimated at two miles, and which Douglas considered to be six miles and a quarter. The traveller also visited Kirau-ea, which he agrees with Douglas in describing as the most remarkable volcano in the world. From the Sandwich Islands, Mr. Löwenstern visited Canton and the island of Celebes, quitted the Asiatic Archipelago by the straits of Sapi, and rounding the Cape of Good Hope, reached Europe in November 1839.—Mr. Löwenstern, who was present, gave an account of a large collection of Mexican antiquities, some curious vases in terra-cotta, drawings, specimens of the produce of the mines, &c., which were exhibited at the meeting.

3. Notes on a Journey from Zacatecas to Camotlan, with a Sketch of the Physical Geography of Mexico, by Major Charters, Royal Artillery.—Veta Grande, or the great metalliferous vein, the point of departure, lies about four miles north of Zacatecas, on a group of isolated mountains about six miles in length, rising from a wide plain, and nearly midway between the Atlantic and the Pacific, which, in the parallel of 23°, is about 400 miles across. Its position is in 22° 50' north, 102° 27' west, and it lies 8,550 feet above the sea,—magnetic variation, 8°, 7 east, in 1831. These mountains are arid, stony, and barren, their surface scarcely affords a symptom of vegetation, but their mineral wealth is great, in this respect perhaps next to Guanajuato. The highest mountain in the group, called the Angel, reaches 8,950 feet. Descending from these mountains (says Major Charters) our route lay west-south-west fifteen leagues, by a gradual descent, to Xeres, a considerable town, situated on a plain 6,592 feet above the sea, near the base of an extensive and rather lofty range of mountains, which bound the valley to the west. A small river, which winds along the plain, irrigates and fertilizes the country, which produces large quantities of Indian corn. The road continues descending in a southerly direction fifteen leagues to the village of Santa Maria, which is 5,660 feet high. A remarkable isolated mountain, in the form of a truncated cone, rises nearly 2,000 feet above the village. At Cartagena, ten leagues farther to the south-west, the river of Xeres is joined by an abundant stream flowing in an opposite direction, or from south to north—the bed of the stream is here 5,330 feet above the sea, and from this point it turns immediately west, twelve leagues, to the valley of Bolaños, where it receives another tributary from the south, and, after a south-south-west course of sixty miles, flows into the Rio Grande or Toluclotlan. Between Cartagena and Bolaños, about forty miles, the river falls 2,352 feet. It is a striking feature in the physical geography of this part of Mexico the

existence of the number of mountain ranges, whose directions nearly coincide with the meridian line. Between the town of Aguas Calientes and the valley of Camotlan, a distance of about 120 miles, I have traversed five of these parallel ranges; the mountains forming them are generally about 2,000 feet above the intermediate valleys, and on some of their slopes useful timber is found in abundance. All the streams which run through these valleys empty themselves into the Rio Grande, which receives the drainage of a great extent of mountainous country to the northward of it. The size of this river, which, after receiving all these tributaries, is certainly not greater than the Tweed at Kelso, is a proof of the small quantity of water furnished by these regions. It is remarkable that such a lofty range as the western boundary of the Bolaños valley, the western slopes of which are covered with immense forests, where the atmospheric water falls abundantly during the months from May to October, furnishes few, if any, perennial streams; so that all superficial vegetation disappears during the dry season: towards the end of that period even the river of Bolaños ceases to flow in a continuous course, and is seen in pools separated from each other by a greater or less space of a superficially dry bed. Rapid evaporation, arising from diminution of atmospheric pressure, is doubtless the cause of this remarkable difference between Mexico and most other countries. The average height of the great table land may be taken at 7,500 feet, and the numerous mountain ranges throw their summits 2,000 or 3,000 feet above this level; but none of them, with the exception of Popocatepetl (17,773 feet), Orizaba (17,370 feet), Nevado de Toluca (15,263 feet) and Istacihuatl, reach the limit of perpetual snow, but these are exoteric mountains, and do not influence the question. Mexico is, therefore, deprived of this resource, which in the more southern regions of the same continent nourishes the great rivers that water it. A vast surface is exposed, during seven months of the year, to the effects of rapid evaporation, increased by a clear atmosphere, and almost unvarying sunshine. The moisture that had been absorbed during the rainy season is exhausted, and the atmosphere becomes so deprived of vapour, that I have frequently found it very difficult to condense it on the black bulb of Daniell's hygrometer, and more than once have failed altogether in doing so. In these elevated regions there is little perceptible perspiration in the human body, for the rapid evaporation carries it off as soon as formed, and, when forced by violent exercise, it remains but for a moment. Passing the village of Cartagena, the road diverges a little from the river, but soon resumes a parallel direction to it; after travelling about ten leagues, over a broken and rather rugged country, presenting also a good deal of plain ground, as at the village of Salitre, we came to the Pinal, a steep and painful ascent, over which the road to Bolaños is conducted. The Pinal is 7,526 feet; the plain of Salitre, from which it rises, is 5,826; hence an ascent of 2,700 feet. Descending from the Pinal, the great features of the western boundary of the Bolaños gorge display themselves; but it is only after the traveller has reached about half way down the slope of the eastern side of the valley, that he can enjoy, to its full extent, the vast and sublime scenery which presents itself. The descent to the river below requires a full hour to accomplish, and is 2,046 feet. I can call to memory no example of scenery equal to this: the gigantic scale of the precipices, the large masses of rock, torn and rent in all forms and shapes, compose a picture so grand, so magnificent, that it has left an impression which time has not diminished, and which surpasses all I have ever witnessed, either amongst the Alps or the Andes. The mining town of Bolaños is situated on the river of that name, in lat. 21° 50' 36" N., and, according to Burkart, 4° 38' 30" W. of Mexico, and 3,090 feet above the sea. The mines were formerly very productive, and, it is to be hoped, will prove so again, as much energy, unwearied perseverance, and a considerable sum of money, have been expended in bringing them into a working state. During the months from May to October, the heat of this valley is very great, and the thermometer ranges high—between 86° and 96°—and, it has been reported, as high as 110°, although I never saw it at that point. The heat absorbed by the bare rocks during the day, radiates in the night, which, added to the want of venti-

lation in so confined a space, renders it very oppressive. Notwithstanding these disadvantages, Bolaños cannot be called an unhealthy place; it is never visited by violent epidemics, with the exception of cholera, which afflicted it in common with the rest of the world. Intermittents are frequent; dysentery less so; but a residence there, for any protracted period, exhausts the constitution. The banana, and most tropical fruits, flourish here, and, during the season of the rains, the vegetation is extremely rapid and luxuriant. Pursuing our journey westward, we crossed the river at a ford about a mile below the town, and soon commenced the ascent of the lofty range which bounds this side of the valley. For some little distance the acclivity is not very rapid, but it soon becomes so, and, on approaching the top, it is so extremely steep, that it requires great labour and exertion to overcome it. This ascent is a business of four hours on horseback, during which time the height of 3,000 feet has been surmounted, and the thermometer sunk 18°. As soon as the summit has been attained, the forest commences which covers the western slopes of this range, and is of very great extent, and contains very fine timber, chiefly oak and pine, of different kinds, and of large scantling, and furnishes an ample supply for the use of the mining establishment in the valley. There is, however, a good deal of trouble and expense in transporting it to the Flechaderas, on the face of the mountains, down which the timber is launched into the valley beneath. There are two of these Flechaderas, the first about 1,000 feet, on a slope of about 45°, or perhaps a little more; the second is 600 feet, and the large and heavy timber comes thundering down them with great velocity, and a crashing din. The forest, which occupies the above-mentioned slopes, is composed entirely of high timber, and is quite free from brushwood. Deer and wild turkeys abounded when the English first went there, but they have now become rather scarce in the immediate neighbourhood of the wood-cutting establishment. Wolves are very numerous and very destructive, and bears have been seen, but they are very rare. The highest point of this range on which I placed a barometer, is the mountain called El Chibo, which is 8,900 feet. The wood-cutting establishment is at a place called Berberia, which is 8,130 feet, about two miles from the beginning of the descent towards Bolaños. After passing the night here, we continued our route, which descends over very broken ground, through the forest, into the valley of Camotlan—another parallel valley to that of Bolaños: its character, however, is totally different, being a plain of considerable width, fertilized by a river; it is cultivated, and produces abundance of maize. None of the wild scenery of Bolaños is found here, but a pleasant, well-ventilated country: its height is 3,868 feet, being also about 800 feet higher than the other. The range of mountains which forms its western boundary is on a larger scale than any I have yet mentioned. I have heard of their extent from the Rio Grande as far as Durango, a distance of 150 miles; and many very lofty points in it are discoverable from the tops of the Bolaños mountains, and the range is seen stretching away to the northward as far as the eye can reach. I have also understood that people have travelled from Camotlan to Durango, along this valley, and found it continue the whole distance. How far this range extends beyond Durango I have never learned. It is inhabited by the Guichole Indians, a harmless and pacific race, who live in the caverns and sheltered places of these mountains, and cultivate maize, and have little or no communication with the neighbouring Creoles. They are armed with bows and arrows, in the use of which they are very dexterous. They are Christians, and are visited by the curate of Bolaños twice a year. Major Charters's paper was illustrated by a section of Mexico, from San Blas, on the Pacific, to Tampico on the Atlantic, geologically coloured by Mr. Burkart, late Chief Miner in the Bolaños Mining Establishment, all the heights in which were observed by two good barometers of Newman's construction.

An Aztec map, seven yards long, was also exhibited, being a copy of that preserved in the Museum at Mexico, and said to show, in hieroglyphics, the route of the Aztecs from Behring's Straits, at the north-western extreme of America, to the capital of Anahuac, or Mexico.

HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY.

March 3.—His Grace the Duke of Devonshire, President, in the chair.

The display of flowers was numerous and superior, including some fine camellias, heaths, &c.: among the most prominent was a splendid plant of *Ficus elastica* (from ten to twelve feet in height), from which the true India rubber is obtained.—It was presented to the Society by H. M. Dyer, Esq.; from Mrs. Lawrence a splendid collection of greenhouse plants; from Mr. Toward, gardener to H.R.H. the Duchess of Gloucester, a fine plant of *Zichya tricolor*—a new species, introduced from the Swan River in 1838; from J. Allnutt, Esq., of Clapham, a collection of Camellias, and *Amaryllis formosissima*; from Mr. Green, gardener to Sir E. Antrobus, a small collection of greenhouse plants; from Mr. Smith, of Kingston, a fine hybrid rhododendron, with pure white flowers, beautifully spotted with purple, &c.; from Mr. Steell, of Richmond, a collection of camellias; from Col. Baker, M.P., *Cattleya mossie*; from S. Rucker, Esq., *Dendrobium speciosum*; from Mr. Scott, gardener to C. Barclay, Esq., a specimen of *Astromeria acutifolia*, measuring twenty-two feet in length, and bearing a cluster of seed-vessels at the top of its stem; it is planted in a narrow border, and trained upon trellis-work till about eight or nine feet in height; it then twines itself to any support, and, when in full flower, presents a very showy appearance; from Mr. Gaines, of Battersea, a seedling Cineraria (named "Gaines's Victoria Regina"); from Mr. Buck, of Blackheath, Charlesworth Tokay grapes, and a variety of pears and apples; from Sir G. S. Mackenzie, Bart., specimens of the Betsy apple, a new seedling from Jersey; from Messrs. Singer & Co., of Vauxhall Potteries, some very pretty flower-vases, scats, and pedestals, of a novel kind (called Patent Alhambra Mosaics), being ornamented with copies of the mosaics in the Alhambra; from the garden of the Society were a collection of plants, including *Lopezia species* (Hartweg), a new plant, recently introduced from Mexico by Mr. Hartweg, the Society's collector. The following prizes were awarded:—the silver Knightian medal to Mrs. Lawrence, for *Echynanthus grandiflorus*; to Mr. Green, for *Hardenbergia complanata*, *Epacris grandiflora*, and *E. pungens rosea*; the silver Banksian Medal to Mrs. Lawrence, for *Erica melanthera* and *E. scabriuscula*, to Mr. Toward for *Zichya tricolor*, to J. Allnutt, Esq., for *Camellia sasangua rosea*, to S. Rucker, Esq., for *Dendrobium speciosum*, and to Mr. Buck for his Charlesworth Tokay grapes.

Dr. Lindley read a paper, by M. Vilmorin, of Paris, 'On the Amelioration and Culture of the Wild Carrot.'—M. Vilmorin is of opinion, from several experiments, that, with care and attention, it might be brought very successfully into cultivation.

Lord Walsingham, the Rev. W. L. Rham, Horatio Kemble, Esq., and William Gregory, Esq., were elected Fellows of the Society; and Prof. P. T. Wahlberg, Secretary of the Horticultural Society of Stockholm, a Foreign Corresponding Member.

The following shows the highest and lowest states of the barometer and thermometer, and the amount of rain, as observed in the garden of the Society, between the 18th of February and the 3rd of March 1840:—

Feb. 25, Barometer, highest.....	30.661
Feb. 23, " lowest.....	30.265
Feb. 29, Thermometer, highest.....	45° Fah.
Feb. 22, " lowest.....	24°

Total amount of Rain 0.00 inch.

BOTANICAL SOCIETY.—March 10.—The Marquis of Northampton, V.P., in the chair.—This was the first meeting for the session. After some preliminary business a ballot for the election of Fellows took place, when 189 were admitted. At the next meeting the plans for laying out the Gardens in Regent's Park will be exhibited. The designs are to be sent in on or before Saturday the 4th of April, and the exhibition of them will take place on the Wednesday following.

ASHMOLEAN SOCIETY.—Oxford, Feb. 17.—The President, Dr. Buckland, in the chair.—The names of the new members of the Committee, Professor Daubeney, Rev. R. Hussey, Professor Powell, the Master of University College, Professor Wilson, were announced; and the annual statement of the accounts was delivered by the Treasurer. Prof.

Daubeny then read a letter from a friend in America, in which the authenticity of the statements in regard to the manners and customs of the aborigines of North America, made by Mr. Catlin, was confirmed. The Professor then proceeded to exhibit the method discovered by Nobili, of producing coloured rays on the surface of polished steel plates, by the action of the galvanic battery. The experiments were varied, by covering portions of the plates with paper, cut into regular shapes and patterns, by which means the original brightness of the metal was preserved in those parts, whilst the colours were elsewhere produced, so that the pattern was accurately transferred to the surface of the steel.—Prof. Powell remarked, that he had, some months ago, examined the nature of the metallic deposit in connexion with his researches into the nature of light, but, as far as his observations went, he did not find that the coloured film on the plate was analogous to common oxydation, since, when a plain polarized ray of light was reflected from the plate, no difference was perceptible between the coloured and uncoloured part.—Prof. Daubeny afterwards explained the method of obtaining fac-similes of medals or coins on Mr. Spencer's principle (see *Athen.* No. 626). Prof. Buckland stated, that amongst the various applications of the principle, it had been found most effective in preparing stereotype plates for printing, so as to obviate the defects to which plaster casts are liable, from their tendency to shrink in drying. A thin sheet of lead is laid upon the face of the original types, and submitted to the action of a heavy press; it is then immersed in the solution of copper, which is precipitated upon it by the action of the voltaic battery, and, in a few hours, the process is completed.

IRISH ACADEMY.

Abstracts are given of such papers only as appear to be of general interest.

The Rev. Dr. Dickinson gave a verbal account of a remarkable waterspout, which he had observed at Killiney during the last summer. Towards the end of the month of July, about 10 A.M., while standing on the shore of the bay of Killiney, his attention was directed by a friend to a waterspout, distant about a quarter of a mile from the land. It was not similar in form to the representations of waterspouts usually given, and may therefore deserve to be noticed. It was shaped like a double syphon, the whole being suspended at a considerable elevation in the air; the longer end of the syphon reached towards the sea, and appeared to approach it nearer and nearer, till, at length, its waters were distinctly seen rushing into the deep. The loop gradually lowered, as if sinking and lengthening by its own weight, while the upper part of the syphon seemed not to lose in elevation. At length the loop burst, and there were three streams of water pouring into the sea, two of those streams still continuing united by the arch at the top. The breadth of these streams gradually diminished till they became invisible, but their length seemed undiminished as long as they were at all seen. The quantity of water poured down must have been very considerable, as the bubbling of the sea beneath could be distinctly observed.

Mr. Clarke read a paper 'On Atmospheric Electricity.' The author commenced his paper with a description of the apparatus which he had employed in the experimental investigation of this subject. He showed the inapplicability of the electrometers hitherto employed, and exhibited an highly insulated galvanometer, containing about three thousand turns of very fine wire covered with silk, varnished and baked,—which instrument, although exquisitely sensitive to the feeblest voltaic electricity, was not at all acted upon by atmospheric electricity of the low tension which exists during serene weather in this country. Mr. Clarke added, that although the application of such an instrument would be a great desideratum in experiments on atmospheric electricity, and in this point of view had been recommended by the highest scientific authorities in Europe, yet he had reason to think that it had never, in any country, been deflected by atmospheric electricity in serene weather. The author then exhibited the electrometer which he had devised for, and used in his experiments on this subject. It consisted of a bell of glass, seven inches in diameter, through

the side of which passed a sliding graduated rod, furnished with a vernier, which indicated the distance, in hundredths of an inch, through which a single pendent slip of leaf gold was attracted towards the rod which was in connexion with the earth. The slip of leaf gold was attached to a vertical and well insulated rod, which passed through a collar of leathers, and could therefore be raised or depressed, as required by the varying intensity, so that the lower end of the leaf should always, when electrified, be a tangent to the ball terminating the graduated rod. The author then alluded to the received opinion, that the Aurora Borealis is an electric discharge of considerable intensity occurring near the polar regions, at great heights in the atmosphere, where the air is necessarily rare, and where, consequently, the electric light (as shown in our artificial imitation of the phenomenon) must be very much diffused and ramified. Hoping to throw light upon this subject, he had made a series of observations on the electric intensity of the twenty-four hours, commencing at mid-day on the 12th of November, 1838, and continued at intervals of fifteen minutes,—except during the appearance of the Aurora, when they were made every five minutes, and even oftener. The results of these observations were laid down in a chart, which exhibited the intensity of the electric fluid during these twenty-four hours, a period including that of the magnificent crimson Aurora, which was observed on the night of the 12th, and morning of the 13th of October, 1838, over every portion of the globe. It appeared, by this chart, that the electric intensity during the existence of this magnificent display of Auroral light was but little above the mean electric intensity of that hour during the month; from which the author inferred that this phenomenon, if at all electric, occurred at such a distance as to be unable to affect the apparatus. The author then proceeded to give an account of the extended series of experiments which he had undertaken at the recommendation of the Academy, and which he had continued during twelve months, at intervals of fifteen minutes, during at least ten days, and from three to seven nights in each month. He stated, that when he had undertaken this series of experiments, he had the following objects in view—namely, to determine the mean amount of electric intensity existing in this country, at the different hours of day and night, and the periods of maxima and minima; and, secondly, to endeavour to trace the cause of this varying intensity to the influence of some of the recognized agents in nature,—such as the variations of atmospheric pressure; the variations of temperature; or the varying quantity of vapour in our atmosphere. He was happy to announce, that he had not only determined the mean monthly and annual force of electricity at the several hours of the day and night, but also had succeeded in establishing its dependence upon two, out of the three agents, with which he had originally proposed to investigate its connexion. The two with which he has established its connexion and proved its dependence are, temperature, and the total quantity of moisture present in the air, as shown by the dew point. Indeed, these two phenomena, as the author remarked, are referrible to each other, the temperature producing evaporation, and the force of electricity at any period being shown to be almost exactly proportional to the tension of the vapour so produced. The hour of the first electric minimum was shown to be about 3 A.M., the electricity increasing with the temperature until 10 A.M., when a slight decrease occurred; the electric tension again commences rising at about 11 A.M.; and continues to increase until about 2½ P.M.,—all these movements being in exact proportion to the elevation of the dew point and temperature. At 3 P.M. the dew point and temperature begin gradually to lower, as does also the electricity (but not so quickly); but from 5 to 7 P.M., the electric intensity rises, being acted upon and increased by the precipitation of the evening dew, which has set free the latent electricity of the condensed vapour, in conformity with the experiment of Volta. Again, from 7 P.M., the electric intensity weakens rapidly, and descends in common with the dew point and temperature, until they all reach their minimum about 3 A.M. Thus the patient investigation of this subject has laid bare the cause of the varying diurnal intensity of the electric fluid,—show-

ing it to be the result of evaporation, which, besides its agency in carrying the electric fluid from our earth to the upper regions of the air, daily returns it to us by the conducting power of this vapour, in the direct proportion of its quantity.

At a subsequent meeting, Mr. Clarke, gave a more detailed description of the mode of insulating the apparatus for experiments on atmospheric electricity, which he had used in the course of his researches. He then described an experiment by which he had shown the absence of decomposing agency in the electricity of serene weather, and stated his opinion of the cause. Mr. Clarke next directed attention to the fact, that the curve representing the diurnal variation of the barometric column was the reverse of the electric, thermometric, and hygrometric curves. He considered that such a result was to be expected; for the barometric column should naturally be lower from mid-day to 3 P.M. than at midnight, in consequence of the greater quantity of aqueous vapour which exists in the atmosphere at the former than at the latter time,—air charged with aqueous vapour being known to be of less specific gravity than dry air. Thus the barometric and hygrometric curves would be the inverse of each other, the maxima of the one corresponding to the minima of the other; and as the author had previously shown that the hygrometric, thermometric, and electrometric curves were in accordance, the barometric curve would be the inverse of the thermometric and electrometric curves also. The author remarked, that if this character of the horary oscillations of the barometer in Ireland be confirmed by the experiments of other observers, it will either lead to new views of this phenomenon generally, or show that the quantity of aqueous vapour existing in Ireland is so great as to cause the horary barometric oscillations to present themselves in a different form from that in which they are recognized in drier climates. The author adverted, in the last place, to the hypothesis of Priestley and Beccaria,—that the upper regions of our atmosphere were the chief depositories of the electric fluid,—an opinion which he conceived must fall, if the origin of atmospheric electricity be due (as his experiments prove) to the existence of vapour; as these elevated parts of our atmosphere are far above the region of permanent vapour, or even of vapour at all.

Mr. Lloyd exhibited to the meeting a specimen of a remarkable substance recently found in the principality of Carolath, in Silesia. It formed part of a cloth of 200 square feet in surface now in the possession of the King of Prussia. No description of this substance has yet been published; but Major Sabine and Mr. Lloyd were informed by Baron Humboldt (by whom the present specimen was kindly given) that M. Ehrenberg had examined it microscopically, and had found it to be an organic substance, consisting partly of vegetable and partly of animal matter; the vegetable component being the *conferva rivularis*, the animal different species of Infusoria, of the family known by the name of *Bacillaria*. To illustrate the origin of this substance, Mr. Lloyd read the following note from Major Sabine, respecting a similar body which has been examined and described by M. Ehrenberg:—"In the year 1686, some workmen who had been fetching water from a pond seven German miles from Memel, on returning to their work after dinner, (during which there had been a snow storm,) found the flat ground around the pond covered with a coal-black, leafy, or paper-like mass; and a person, who lived near, said he had seen it fall like flakes with the snow. On examination, some of the pieces were found to be as large as a table, and were lying upon each other to the depth of the thickness of a finger. The mass was damp and smelt disagreeably, like rotten seaweed; but when dried the smell went off. It tore fibrously like paper. Specimens were preserved in several collections, where it was known by the name of *Meteor-paper*, and by many was actually supposed to be a meteoric body. It has been recently examined by M. Ehrenberg, and found to consist partly of vegetable matter, chiefly *conferva crispata*, (common in Germany,) and partly of *infusoria*, of which M. Ehrenberg was able to recognize twenty-nine species. Of these, eight species have been siliceous coverings, but the others, which are equally well preserved, were soft-skinned animals; most of them are

known as species now existing. The Meteor-paper, therefore, as it has been called, was formed in marshy places; had been raised into the air by storms of wind; and had again fallen. Substances of the same nature have been found in Norway, in Silesia, and in the Erz Mountains. In some instances they are described as *leathery*; in others as resembling *wadding*, and being white on the upper side and green beneath. They have probably all a similar origin." Mr. Lloyd also laid on the table of the Academy a specimen of a very similar substance, which he had received from Sir John Herschel, and which was found investing the rocks at the mouth of one of the rivers of Southern Africa. It resembles the other very much in external appearance, except that the fibres are coarser, and more compactly matted together. It appears to consist almost entirely of *conferæ*, but apparently of a different species.

A paper was read by Mr. J. Huband Smith, descriptive of certain porcelain seals, amounting to upwards of a dozen, found in Ireland within the last six or seven years, and in places very distant from each other.

He exhibited to the Academy one of these seals, with impressions of several others in sealing-wax. He stated that they were all uniform, consisting of an exact cube, having, by way of handle, some animal (probably an ape) seated upon it; and that they were so precisely similar in size and general appearance as to be undistinguishable, except by the characters on the under surface. Little is known respecting these seals beyond the mere fact of their having been found in this country. An extract from the Chinese grammar of Abel-Rémusat showed that the inscriptions on these seals are those of a very ancient class of Chinese characters, "in use since the time of Confucius," who is supposed to have flourished "in the middle of the sixth century, before J. C." The remote period to which these characters are assigned, leaves open a wide field for conjecture as to the time in which these porcelain seals found their way into this country. The situations in which some of them have been found are remarkable. One was discovered in ploughing a field near Burrisokane, county of Tipperary, in 1832; another was found last year at Killead, in the county of Down; another in the bed of the river Boyne, near Clonard, in the county of Meath, in raising gravel; and a fourth was discovered many years ago at a short distance from Dublin. From the extreme degree of heat to which they appear to have been subjected, and the consequent vitrification which has in some measure taken place, they are quite as capable of resisting the attacks of time as the glass and porcelain deities and ornaments found in the mummy cases of Egypt, and may have lain for an indefinite period beneath the surface of the earth. It is therefore, at least, possible that they may have arrived hither from the East, along with the weapons, ornaments, and other articles of commerce, which were brought to these islands by the ships of the great merchant-princes of antiquity, the Phœnicians, to whom our ports and harbours were well known. Mr. Smith then called attention to the remarkable discovery made by Rosellini, Lord Prudhoe, and other recent travellers, of unquestionable Chinese vases in the tombs of Egypt. He read a passage from Davis's China, in which some of them were described; and also an extract from Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, from which it appeared that the number of Chinese vases found at Coptos, Thebes, and elsewhere, amounted to seven or eight, and that the inscriptions on them had been translated by Chinese scholars to mean, "The flower opens, and lo! another year," being a line from an ancient Chinese poem. From this the trade of China with distant countries, at a period of the remotest antiquity, being clearly proved, Mr. Smith submitted to the Academy that a case of strong probability had been made out, that the porcelain seals found their way into Ireland at some very distant period. In fact, if they be not of modern introduction into this country—a supposition which the situations in which several of them have been found seems utterly to preclude—their arrival here must of necessity have been most ancient.

Mr. Petrie read a paper "On Ancient Seals of Irish Chiefs, and persons of inferior rank," preserved in the collections of Irish Antiquities formed by the Dean of St. Patrick's, and by himself. He observed that this

class of antiquities had been but little attended to by Irish antiquaries—a circumstance which he attributed to the want of general collections of our national antiquities till a recent period; and hence, if the question had been asked a short time since, whether the Irish had the use of signets generally amongst them or not, it would have been impossible to give a decisive answer. This question, however, can now be answered in the affirmative; but the period at which the use of seals commenced in Ireland is still uncertain, as no Irish seals anterior to the Anglo-Norman invasion have been found; or, if found, their discovery has not been recorded. As, however, it is now certain that seals were used by the Anglo-Saxons, it is not improbable that their use may have been introduced into Ireland also—more especially as a remarkable similarity prevailed between the two countries in customs and in knowledge of the arts. The Irish seals hitherto discovered are similar in style and device to the contemporary seals of the Anglo-Normans of similar rank; and, like the secular seals of the latter, are usually of a circular form, whilst the ecclesiastical seals are usually oval.

Dr. Apjohn read a note, by G. J. Knox, Esq., "On the Oxidating Power of Glass for Metals, and on the want of Transparency in Ancient Glass." In a late work, which treats of the manufacture of glass, an experiment of Guyton Morveau is mentioned, in which six per cent. of copper filings having been mixed with pounded glass, and the compound completely melted, it was found to have assumed a red colour uniformly diffused throughout the mass, so deep as to render the glass nearly opaque. The experiment originated from a workman in the glass-house having dipped a heated copper ladle into a pot of fused glass. The copper ladle was melted; the casting and annealing of the plates were proceeded with as usual; and, on their completion, the workmen were surprised to find, that not only were grains of metallic copper embedded in the substance of the glass, but bands uniformly coloured of a fine bright red, were distributed throughout the mass. The experiment of Guyton Morveau, being but a repetition of the accidental one made by the workman, seems to have but little engaged his attention, the colour being conceived to be due to an *imperfect* state of oxidation, as oxide of copper imparts to glass a greenish colour. It appeared to me, at first sight, that the red colour was due to the actual solution of the copper in the metallic state, the globules of copper imbedded in the mass having been deposited from a state of solution, upon cooling. To determine this, I mixed in different proportions with powdered glass, iron, lead, copper, silver, bismuth, antimony, tin, gold, platinum, in a minute state of division; and found that glass, when mixed with iron filings, will oxidate and dissolve almost as much iron, when mixed with it in the metallic state, as if it were mixed with it in the state of oxide. Of copper, only a small proportion is oxidated and dissolved, imparting a green colour to the glass, while the rest remains disseminated throughout the glass in globules of copper and red streaks, which are probably the protoxide; whereas lead (for whose oxide glass has such a strong affinity) oxidates but a small portion, when mixed with it in the metallic state, the rest being found imbedded in globules throughout its mass. Tin, antimony, and bismuth are more easily oxidized and dissolved than lead. Gold, when fused with glass, imparts to it a light greenish tinge, increasing in depth with the relative proportion of silica in the glass,—producing a deeper colour with the bisulfate than the silicate of potash, and still deeper when German glass (which contains a large proportion of silica) is employed; globules of gold are found (as in the analogous cases of lead and copper) disseminated throughout the mass. If the heat be increased, and the crucible containing the gold be left for some hours in the furnace, the glass assumes a pinkish hue, which is the colour imparted to it by the protoxide of gold. When platinum sponge is fused with glass, it sinks to the bottom of the crucible unaltered, owing to its infusibility. When charcoal is heated with glass, a large proportion is oxidated, the remainder presenting the appearance of a mechanical mixture. From these experiments it appears that glass, at high temperatures, not only has the property of oxidating the metals, and forming a chemical compound with the oxide, but moreover, when the chemical affinity

is satisfied, of dissolving the oxides, and probably the metals themselves when in a state of fusion; the latter, on the cooling of the glass, being deposited in globules throughout its interstices, (at least the appearance presented by the glass seems to favour such an opinion). The colours produced by the fusion of metals with glass, being different in many cases from those obtained when their oxides were employed, and presenting the dull untransparent appearance which is so remarkable in ancient glass, led me to suppose that the ancients did not employ any colouring matter unknown at the present day, but that, being unacquainted with the mineral acids, they employed the metals either in the metallic state, in filings, or else in an imperfect state of oxidation. To determine the probability of this conjecture, I selected three specimens of mosaic glass, analyzed by Klaproth; and substituting for the oxides, in the same relative proportion, the metals in a minute state of division, I obtained coloured glasses of nearly the same colour as the mosaics, while the colours produced when the oxides were employed were not only perfectly different, but the glasses were clear and transparent. One of a lively copper red, opaque and very bright, contained, in 200 grains, silica 142, oxide lead 28, copper 15, iron 2, alumina 5, lime 3. Another, of a light verdigris green, contained, in 200 grains, silica 130, oxide copper, 20, lead 15, iron 7, lime 13, alumina 11. A specimen of blue glass contained, in 200 grains, silica 163, oxide iron 19, oxide copper 1, alumina 3, lime 4.

MEETINGS FOR THE ENSUING WEEK.

SAT.	Westminster Medical Society	Eight. P.M.
	(Statistical Society (Admin.))	Three.
MON.	Society of British Architects	Eight.
	Royal Academy (Sculpture)	Three.
TUES.	Horticultural Society	Eight.
	Linnean Society	Eight.
	Institute of Civil Engineers	Eight.
WED.	Society of Arts	p. Seven.
	Royal Society	p. Eight.
THUR.	Society of Antiquaries	p. Eight.
	Royal Academy (Painting)	Eight.
FRI.	Botanical Society	Eight.
	Royal Institution	p. Eight.

FINE ARTS

NEW PUBLICATIONS.

Nos. VIII. and IX. of Mr. Owen Jones's *Plans and Sections of the Alhambra*, once more bring before us the riches of Moorish architecture, presented with a splendour little less unique, after its kind, than the magnificent remains represented. The care, indeed, with which the prodigality of gorgeous colours and graceful forms, inwrought in arabesque, is here rendered,—the minuteness with which every architectural detail is here traced,—can hardly be praised too highly. On the subjects of the plates a volume could be written. Those in the present numbers most interesting and attractive are the series devoted to the ceiling of the *Sala del Tribunal*, in which heroic acts and monarchs of renown are portrayed under a formal but not inexpressive guise, strangely similar to those of the historical figures in the Bayeux tapestry. The work must, we fear, prove, by many degrees, more precious to antiquaries, architects, and decorators, than remunerative to the spirited and enthusiastic artist.

Appropos of decorators, the second and third parts of *The Ornamental Designs of Watteau* wait attention. What, of their class, can be more gracefully coxcombical, more fancifully courtly than the "Hunting Party," in the latter number? Compare, for instance, the exquisite *dolce far niente* of the *racoon* Diana and her Versailles Acteon, with what may be found in a neighbour work on our table, namely, the whimsical transcripts of modern ladies and gentlemen in masquerade, furnished by Mr. Edward Corbould, in his lithographs of the *Tournament at Eglington Castle*! Not that the artist has failed in transferring to stone the Queen of Love and Beauty, and the Knight of the Red Rose, and the finery of squires, paladins, pages, and fair ladies, which, after having done its part at the drowned banquet, and (*most appropriately*) in the mazy waltz,—selected in place of the *bransle* to close the revel,—was to be handed over to the property-man at the Adelphi. Nay, inasmuch as Mr. Corbould has given to his scenes a clear sky over-head and a smooth award underfoot, it is probable that his record of the "gentle and free

passage of arms at Eglintoun" flatters the reality. The letter-press appended to the lithographs is wonderfully amusing, only one degree less so than that of—*A Right Faithful Chronicle of the Ladies and Knights who gained Worship at the Grand Tourney holden at his Castle by the Earl of Eglintoun*—a little book, of which this episodic mention must suffice. As our notice already embraces matters as heterogeneous as the Alhambra and the Eglintoun Folly, it may be further stretched, to include the mention of another folio, totally different in subject. This contains Mr. Ziegler's drawings of the *Royal Lodges in Windsor Great Park*, executed by command of Her Majesty. The scale of the plates is royal; their execution, too, superior; but the work will have more interest for the landscape gardener or architect than the general public.

Foremost among publications smaller in scale and pretension stand the *Illustrations of the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy*, by a Sister of the Religious Order of Mercy, with descriptive Anecdotes.—These are fully described in the title; for it is in the title that the curiosity of the work lies, and not in the outline representations of the philanthropic labours of the Order, which, indeed, bear more traces of willing heart than of skilful hand. A notice no less brief will discharge the dues of the *Churches of Devonshire*, a series of good lithographs, by Mr. Spreat; the interest of which is merely local. *Illustrations of British Costume*, by Leopold and Charles Martin, deserve a wider acceptance, and, in the present state for close historical accuracy in pictorial and scenic details, ought to possess a special value and interest for the painter and the property-man, as sparing him elaborate research into the obscure and widely-scattered sources whence they are derived. They are slightly etched, but with ease. Mr. Walton's *New Sepia Landscape Drawing-Book* is one of the most useful fruits of Hüllmandel's new style which has yet appeared. The examples of rural architecture, foliage, &c., pleasantly combined, have more of the drawing-master's, and less of the printer's touch, than those in almost any elementary work we remember: while the warmth of tone peculiar to sepia, gives them an attractiveness beyond the reach of compositions in black and white. *Page's Guide to Ornamental Drawing and Design* is a useful and well illustrated little work. Illustration is given with reference to principles, and by such examples as will help to educate the eye as well as the hand. Another work, which may be here adverted to, has lately been issued by our neighbour, Mr. Bielefeld, *On the Use of the Improved Papier Mâché*; and certainly he has shown, not only its use, but its beauty, so clearly as to make his volume a sad temptation to persons of more taste than fortune. To close this paragraph, we must announce the appearance of No. 2. of *Nethercliff's Letters of Illustrious Personages*, containing, like its predecessor, not merely curious specimens of caligraphy, but welcome illustrations of character, in the fac-similes it includes. These are of the handwriting of Wolsey, Sir T. More, T. Cromwell, Margaret Tudor, Brandon Duke of Suffolk, Cranmer, Thomas Howard fourth Duke of Norfolk, Mary Queen of Scots, Prince Henry to his father James I., Oliver Cromwell, and Prince Rupert.

Half-a-dozen single prints remain to be noticed, only two among them being portraits of Prince Albert. The first is a large mezzotint, engraved by Scott, after Meyern Hohenberg,—the least agreeable portrait we have yet seen, His Highness being therein made to look sulky, and to grasp the sword in his hand with doggedness rather than resolution. The other is the small anonymous head put forth by Mr. Mitchell, to accompany a not very happily reduced profile likeness of *Her Majesty*, engraved by Scriven, after Lane. Next in interest to these, and of a far higher order as a work of art, is the rich and forcible mezzotint, by Mr. Burgess, after Hopper's portrait of *Lord Nelson*. Mr. Hunt's fancy figure of a boy washing his face, yeelp "a Scrub," has been rendered by Mr. Egan. It would seem as if engraver, as well as the painter, wished to have his part in the play upon words; Mr. Egan's execution, though free, being not sufficiently clear—smeared, in short, if not positively "scrubbed." Our notice must now close with a mention of Mr. Briery's *Yacht Dolphin*, another of his clever marine portraits; and of a representation, by Jones and Hawkins, of the monu-

ment recently erected to Chatterton, at Bristol, "near the north porch of Redcliffe Church."

MUSIC

PHILHARMONIC SOCIETY.—First Concert.—If it were the fashion here to deal in dashing definitions, like our brethren in France, we might call this the Concert in the key of C.—Spohr's Symphony, No. 5, being in the minor, and Beethoven's pianoforte concerto performed by Mr. W. S. Bennett, and his symphony which opened the second part, being in the major. This predominance of "the wanton key" of the ancients was, in itself, enough to make the concert what it was, lethargic,—lethargic, in spite of the coarseness of the orchestra, which, to call things by their right names, was throughout the evening chargeable with drumming, braying, and scraping,—the *andante* and minuet of the Beethoven symphony being the exceptions, and performed in a style more refined. But Spohr's new symphony, intrinsically, as well as in conjunction, was narcotic. The first *allegro*, in 3 time, is heavy, and unpleasing in subject; the slow movement in A flat is better, but clogged and faded, if compared with the clear and fresh slow movements of the really great symphonists; the minuet clumsy and characterless, and, as too often happens with Spohr's minuets, totally devoid of relief in the trio,—how far falling short, for instance, if compared with the trio of the minuet in the Beethoven symphony, Beethoven's weakest!—the *finale* bolder, and wrought with the master's usual skill, but still only skilful where it should have been engaging. According to strict order, we ought already to have offered some account of the results of the entire re-arrangement of the orchestra. The violins are now assembled in a circle in front, and, with the exception of Lindley and Dragonetti, the violoncelli and double basses are drawn back to the right and left wings of the orchestra, the wind instruments occupying the distant centre. But, for the present, we can only say that some brilliancy appears to have been gained by the change; since, whether it arose from the strangeness of the instruments in their new positions, or from the leadership of Mr. F. Cramer, or from the conductorship of Mr. Potter, certain it is that the orchestral performances of the evening were so coarsely noisy, as to preclude the possibility of any nice conclusion being drawn, which should determine the relative values of the old and the new apportionments. With the exception of his introduced cadence, which struck us as being deficient in enterprise and interest, Mr. W. S. Bennett played Beethoven's concerto well. The solo in the second act was Rode's violin concerto in D minor, performed with great truth and finish by Mr. Blagrove. The singing was not what Philharmonic singing should be. Mdlle. Villowen and her sister, Madame Caton, were two French ladies, with high soprano voices, which go pleasantly together, but they are not sufficiently experienced to stand the ordeal of classical music, as their uncertainty in the trio from 'Azor and Zemira' too clearly manifested. In this they were joined by Miss Masson, who, earlier in the evening, had sung, and sung most excellently, that canonet by Lachner, 'The sea has pearly treasures,' which we mentioned a week or two since. As before, she was excellently accompanied on the horn by Mr. Jarrett; or to speak more exactly on the present occasion, in consequence of the song, which is written for the pianoforte, having been scored, the voice was rather an accompaniment to the orchestra and the *corno obbligato*, than the instruments to the voice. Apropos of Lachner's song, its fortune is a sufficient illustration of the mutabilities of Chance. After having been for some years in the London shops, having been even sung in public without exciting any sensation whatsoever, it is now circulating everywhere,—nor in London only, but in Paris, also for there Mdlle. Pauline Garcia and M. A. Batta have adopted it; and will, of course, make it the rage.

QUARTETT CONCERTS.—These have hitherto proceeded steadily rather than brilliantly. At the second concert, a Quartett by Krommer, was the greatest instrumental novelty: at the third, Beethoven's quartett No. 10, the greatest attraction. This work always seems to us interesting, as a link between the composer's earlier and more symmetrical manner, and that later style, which has by some been

thought the raving of a dotard, by others, those finest frenzies of a poet, to which the fit audience is "few." The return to the principal subject in the first *allegro*—the whole embroidery of the theme and filling-up of the exquisite *adagio*, the amazing freedom of the *scherzo*, wild and scornful but playful withal, (perhaps Beethoven's most individual *scherzo*,) and the forms into which the variations of the final air are thrown—are all so many anticipations of the eccentricities which form the staple of the master's later quartetts, and which must be received and accepted, not as episodes, but as foundations, in place of the elder and soberer forms of progression and harmony, ere those strange compositions can be in anywise relished. The quartett was well played, the *scherzo* especially; but the second violin and viola are still too timid, and Mr. Blagrove, though warming, is still colder than that degree of the musical thermometer at which Beethoven flourishes. In the second act Miss Orger, a pupil of Mr. Potter's, made her *début* doubly arduous, by taking the piano part of Beethoven's grand trio in B flat. Her performance displayed spirit, and a well-trained pair of hands, but the poetry of the work was missing; some composition more difficult in execution, but less deep in expression, would have at once displayed her powers and suited her attainments. Hers, however, is a laudable ambition, if it lead her to attack the greatest classical music. The singers were Miss Birch, and Miss Dolby. The former gave the great song 'Robert,' from Meyerbeer's opera, in very fine style, and with a marked improvement in her articulation—afterwards Schubert's 'Ave Maria.' This latter, however, she utterly disfigured by the long useless cadence *poked* in at its close; a transaction which, on the part of so clever and improving a singer, can hardly be denounced too severely:—her intonation, too, was not so true as it ought to be. Two pleasant rumours were abroad in the room, to which amateurs ought to give ear, concerning Mendelssohn's new pianoforte trio, intrusted to Madame Dulcken, and a MS. composition of the same class, by Mr. W. S. Bennett, which are to be performed at coming concerts of the quartett party.

MISCELLANEA

Copyright Bill.—To the Editor of the *Athenæum*.—Sir,—I shall feel obliged by your giving the advantage of the extensive circulation of the *Athenæum* to the enclosed letter, which has appeared in the *Times*.—I am Sir, Your most Humble Servant, ROBERT CADELL.

To the Editor of the *Times*.—Sir,—In your paper of the 2nd inst., Mr. Tegg, of Cheapside, bookseller, has addressed a letter to Lord John Russell on the Copyright-Bill of Serjeant Talfourd in which, among other random statements, he says,—"I believe the whole project of this Bill originated with Sir Walter Scott's representatives, and those interested in the literary property created by him."—There is not, however, one atom of truth in this assertion or insinuation. Mr. Serjeant Talfourd's speech in the House of Commons, introducing his first Bill, of May, 1837, was the first intimation that I, or any other person interested in Sir Walter Scott's literary property, ever received of any such measure being in contemplation. Your Obed. Servant, Edinburgh, March 5, 1840. (Signed) ROBERT CADELL.

Severe Frost in the South of France.—Destruction of the Almond Crop.—The following is an extract from the letter of a correspondent, dated Marseilles, 27th February.—"The severity of the frost, during February, has been more intense, more injurious to the crops, than any experienced in the south of France since 1829. I left Paris on the 20th; it blew strong, looked tempestuous: betwixt Paris and Sens a considerable sprinkling of snow fell. At Auxerre, on the 21st, the sky was clear and the frost severe: we were posting in a comfortable close caleche, provided with all the coats and wrappings employed to encounter an English winter night, yet the cold was most disagreeable, and on arriving at Saulieu at two o'clock in the morning, I found that the thermometer, enclosed in a thick carpet bag inside the carriage, had sunk to 25°, and in the portico of the inn it fell to 16°. The 22nd was one of the most remarkable bright days of sunshine, and of intensely cutting frost, that could be imagined. Not a single cloud was visible. The thermometer, laid on the top of my hat within the carriage, rose to 80°, yet in the shade, exposed to the open sky, it sank to 20° at mid-day. A large and deep pond, which I examined close by Saulieu, was covered with ice 14 inch in thickness. No rut of skate or trace of curling stone, not even the foot of the school-boy slider, had been there, so rarely is a field afforded for the exercise of this pastime. At six o'clock on the morning of the 23rd we

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